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351 die as airliners crash in mid-air

India orders inquiry into why departing and arriving jets met

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI AND HARVEY ELLIOTT

AT LEAST 351 people, including one Briton, are believed dead after a mid-air collision between a Saudi Airways Boeing 747 and a Russian-built Ilyushin-76 of Kazakh Airways near Delhi last night.

The Indian Government immediately ordered a judicial inquiry to determine if there was pilot error or whether air traffic controllers were to blame.

Witnesses on the ground described seeing a fireball falling out of the sky at dusk. Debris fell over flat farmland 40 miles southwest of the capital, a thinly populated area dotted with villages. Telephone communications are poor and access to the crash site is along farm tracks, hampering efforts by emergency services to reach the area. By early today 274 charred bodies had been recovered from the site.

Ram Singh, a building contractor who witnessed the crash from his home, said: "I saw a fireball and big black smoke falling into the fields."

The commander of a US Air Force transport plane that was flying near the mid-air collision said he saw a cloud glow, bright orange and two fireballs plunge to the ground.

Delhi airport officials said the Saudi plane, whose final destination was Jeddah, had 312 passengers and crew

aboard, many of them Indian labourers on their way to Saudi Arabia. It took off from Delhi at about 6.13pm local time as the Kazakh Airways Ilyushin-76, on an unscheduled flight, was coming in to land. The collision happened seven minutes after the Saudi aircraft left the ground.

India's Air Traffic Controllers' trade union, said last night the disaster could have been averted if there had been separate arrival and departure routes at Delhi airport. Aircraft departing or arriving have to follow the same narrow corridor. It said controllers at Delhi had been making requests for separate routes for a long time.

The guild said both aircraft had been under radar control at the time of the accident and had been advised about each other's presence. The possible cause was equipment failure.

"The Kazakh aircraft could have been at a lower height than had been assigned to it," the guild said.

H.S. Khola, Director General of Civil Aviation, said Delhi control tower had cleared the Saudi flight at 14,000 ft and the Russian-built aircraft had been cleared to descend to 15,000 ft. This distance was "normal practice".

Aviation sources said the disaster could have been the

result of a misunderstanding between air traffic controllers and the Kazakh Airways pilot. Previous problems had been caused by the poor command of English by pilots from Central Asian countries.

Indian airports do not have an impressive safety record and there has been criticism by pilots of standards at Delhi, although these have been improved significantly in recent years.

There was speculation last night that the Kazakh pilot may have cut corners to try to reduce his approach time. There is also the possibility of sudden mechanical failure, causing a loss of altitude.

The ground control system relies on the aircraft's own height-encoding transponders to indicate its precise altitude. If the transponder was either not fitted on the Ilyushin-76 or was switched off or incorrectly timed, the controllers on the ground may not have known that the two jets were on a collision course.

The Saudi Boeing was fitted with the latest navigation aids and transponders and their pilots are regarded as among the most proficient in the world.

It was also almost certainly fitted with mid-air collision warning device called TCAS.

Although this is only mandatory for aircraft flying in US airspace, a growing number of airlines in the rest of the world are being fitted with the equipment which gives a voice and visual warning of any impending collision. But it is only effective if the other aircraft is equipped with a working transponder.

H.D. Devi Gowda, the Indian Prime Minister, ordered

emergency services from Delhi into the area and appealed to the state government of Haryana, where the disaster happened, to mobilise resources.

Most of the wreckage fell around the village of Charkhi Dadri, although there were no immediate reports of anyone being killed by debris. The

crash area was cordoned off by police and roads were cleared to help emergency vehicles to gain access.

The Kazakh plane, carrying 27 passengers and ten crew, is believed to have been taking people on a shopping expedition to Delhi, a favourite destination because of the availability of cheap clothes.

It was India's worst air disaster and appears to rank as the world's third worst airline accident. Two Boeing 747s operated by PanAm and KLM collided on the ground at Tenerife in 1977, killing 582; a Japan Airlines Boeing 747 crashed into a mountain on a domestic flight in 1985, killing 520; and in 1974 a Turkish DC-

10 crashed northeast of Paris, killing 346. The worst mid-air collision before yesterday was in 1976 when a Trident and DC-9 collided over Zagreb with the loss of 176 lives.

Ranjan Chatterjee, chairman of the Airports Authority of India, denied there had been an error by air traffic controllers. There had been

tension between the management and the controllers recently over the suspension of some controllers over their work performance but these were said to have been resolved.

The black box from one of the aircraft was discovered last night, although it was trapped in wreckage.

Christmas post strike called off

A postal strike which threatened to disrupt Christmas deliveries has been averted after unions last night accepted a peace deal from the Royal Mail.

The Communication Workers Union is to ballot its members with a recommendation to accept a 3 per cent pay rise.

Priest sent porn on the Internet

A Roman Catholic priest sexually abused boys in his parish and used the internet to pass details of what he had done to fellow paedophiles around the world.

Father Adrian McLeish, who held the largest known collection of illicit material yet gathered electronically, was jailed for six years ... Page 3

Major confronts EU over 48-hour ruling

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR, AND CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

JOHN MAJOR paved the way for confrontation with the European Union lasting up to and through the general election yesterday when he pledged to reverse a European Court of Justice verdict imposing a 48-hour maximum working week on Britain.

The Prime Minister, in a move that won the backing of most Tory MPs, and particularly the Euro-sceptic wing, announced he could not accept the ruling of the Luxembourg judges and that if it was not changed he would block any agreement in the inter-governmental conference shaping Europe's future.

As the European Commission accused Mr Major of trying to hold his EU colleagues to ransom, amendments were tabled by Britain in Brussels last night that would have the effect of overturning the ruling and blocking

it.

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Howard doubles cash to placate Tory gun rebels

By JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HOWARD tried to buy off an embarrassing rebellion by Tory MPs last night by doubling the amount of compensation for gun owners and excluding historical guns from the proposed ban on handguns.

A group of senior Tory backbenchers was threatening revolt against the

Government if the Home Secretary refused to increase the amount of compensation, which had been set at between £25 million and £50 million.

During the debate on the second reading of the Firearms Amendment Bill Mr Howard said that gun accessories such as reloaders, special sights and holsters would be included in the package. Officials admitted that this could raise the compensation to

£100 million. Antique guns would be excluded from the ban as would muzzle-loading firearms and most handguns made before 1919.

Among the weapons which will be exempt from the new firearms law is the Webley service pistol, the standard weapon issued to British army officers during the two World Wars.

Michael Yardley, for the Sportsmen's Association, welcomed the con-

cessions but said the Bill was "fundamentally flawed". He said that if it became law it would lead to the loss of 2,000 jobs and cost the taxpayer £300 million in compensation.

Several MPs suggested that Mr Howard had not gone far enough and argued that gun clubs and their employees should be given further compensation for loss of income, if they went out of business.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Nolan to head new inquiry on liability

Personal liability of councilors, university and school governors and other trustees of public and charitable bodies for decisions they make in office is to be the subject of a fresh inquiry by Lord Nolan (Valerie Elliott writes).

The study will examine the variation between the different forms of liability and will help to determine whether the surcharging of councilors should continue in its present form. It will also examine the precise legal status of individuals who sit on public bodies and whether insurance cover is available.

Carey warning

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, gave a warning against American-style "doughnut" cities developing in Britain as the middle classes desert the city centres, which then become "sink" of deprivation, crime and drug abuse. He blamed the collapse of moral codes.

Plastic cash

The Bank of England is considering the introduction of plastic banknotes. They are said to be longer-lasting than the paper variety, more resistant to tearing and harder to counterfeit. Banking officials said, however: "We are a long way from discarding our paper money."

Cracker deal

An American version of the award-winning ITV series *Cracker*, starring Robbie Coltrane, is to be made by Granada television in a deal struck with US network ABC. The series will be set in America with American actors. The deal is believed to be worth around £5 million.

£2.4m damages

A father of two who suffered brain damage after an asthma attack was awarded a record £2.4 million in damages against the GP who treated him. The award was made to Leslie Drake, 38, who was starved of oxygen during the attack ten years ago and now needs 24-hour care.

College pledge

Governors at Stoke-on-Trent College are to investigate a Times report that Neil Preston, chief executive, and Helen Chandler, an assistant director, both on long-term sick leave, are helping to run a pub in Wales. The two were not available for comment.

House payout

The Court of Appeal confirmed £50,000 compensation for a couple whose neighbour undertook extensive changes to his semi-detached house in Stoke Newington, north London. Three years of work damaged their home and delayed its sale as a result.

Green Rover

John Major has taken delivery of a car powered by natural gas and said such vehicles would in future play a key role in cleaning up the air. The Rover is the first environmentally friendly vehicle to be bought by the Government's car pool.

Gandhi's letters

A collection of newly-discovered letters by Gandhi have been withdrawn from auction by Phillips after a dispute over their ownership. The letters, from 1948, are worth an estimated £1 million and include criticisms of Churchill and Earl Mountbatten.

Tree language

The Plain English Campaign has ridiculed Northampton Borough Council for calling a Christmas tree a "horticultural festive element". The council said it had a policy of avoiding offence to other cultures, but the description was tongue-in-cheek.

Party leaders welcome timely gift from Santer

Nothing is more fun than a public execution. Yesterday your sketchwriter took himself off to Committee Room 15 to watch the next instalment of the dismembering of the Tory whip who made the mistake of putting on paper what whips of both parties have always arranged in practice: David Willets.

Were the cartoonist Bate- man still alive, Mr Willets would feature in one of his classic depictions of social gaffes: *The Man Who Wrote it Down*. One pictures the gawky confusion of the MP as older whips rush for the

door while moustachioed colleagues raise eyebrows over the brandy.

At the start of the proceedings, a white-haired old lady was shown by the policeman on duty to a front seat in the public gallery, presumably to knit by the guillotine.

Mr Willets looks like a giant, scraggy chicken. Yesterday he was set upon by the Dobermann-like Dale Campbell-Savours (Lab, Workington), who clearly sees himself as some sort of poor man's Perry Mason, interrupting the replies to his sneering questions. Mr Campbell-Savours became so obsessive

that he failed to rescue Willets from his drubbing at the more polite but deadly hands of Quentin Davies (Stamford & Spalding), on his own side on Monday.

Take it from an old Parliamentary hand: this kind of investigation will never work. It runs right against the grain of the Commons ethos, as does the whole select committee system. The whips on both sides infiltrated select com-

mittee work from the start, and this episode throws a rare shaft of daylight on to the process. But nobody really wants to change it. Whether Labour, Liberal Democrat or Tory you simply do not attack your own colleagues in public unless you want to become a pariah. This is what Quentin Davies now risks. Each party has ways of disciplining, or even destroying, its own Members in private. But never

in front of the children. To watch the proceedings of the Standards and Privileges Committee yesterday was to observe the clash of two cultures. The culture of party, ancient and integral to the place, versus the culture of neutral inquiry, an uncomfortable import. Party will prevail. The struggle, an awkward affair, was disturbing to witness, and I returned to the Chamber ...

... Where Father Christmas has visited MPs early, bringing an educational toy guaranteed to give the kiddies on both sides hours of fun. The toy is unbreakable, dura-

ble and comes with batteries. We refer, of course, to the European Working Time Directive. John Major must be grateful to Santa.

Yesterday he told MPs he had written to Santer to complain: Do not be fooled: complaining is part of the game.

The Directive provides something completely inconsequential about which all parties at Westminster can have a principled row. There is no danger of the Directive being implemented in the foreseeable future.

Nor is there any danger that the PM will have to test

his anti-European missiles this side of the election — as Tony Blair reminded MPs yesterday.

Major can huff and puff merrily. If he loses the election, nothing matters. If he wins, then, a hero to his troops, he can march them smartly down from the top of the hill while the champagne corks pop.

Meanwhile, Blair's troops are poised behind him, while Major's cheer lingers behind their own leader. Nothing happens, and both men stay popular with their own side. What more can a party leader ask from Santa — or Santer?

Gaddafi revenge threat to back IRA

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

THE Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi, yesterday threatened to "intervene in the civil war between Britain and the IRA" in retaliation for the formation of a four-nation European force designed to step into crises in the Mediterranean area.

He said the move amounted to a "declaration of war by Europe" against the North African states. Britain is not part of the new force, named Eurofor, which was unveiled at the weekend in Florence.

The force will be able to draw up to 10,000 troops from Italy, France, Spain and Portugal to undertake humanitarian and peacekeeping missions in the Mediterranean region. There is also to be a new joint naval force called Euromarfor, led by a French aircraft carrier. Both forces will be at the disposal of Nato and the UN as well as the Western European Union.

Colonel Gaddafi, regarded by the Western powers as an unpredictable sponsor of terrorism, said Eurofor was itself "new international terrorism, and we utterly reject it". Although the Libyan leader's remarks were dismissed by some diplomats as "his usual rhetorical posturing", they caused dismay in Italy, which had hoped Colonel Gaddafi might attend the World Food Summit, which opens in Rome today.

Colonel Gaddafi, who has boasted of supplying arms to the IRA, singled out Britain, which was engaged in a civil war "with bombs and guns in the middle of London". Perhaps we need a force to intervene in Britain?" he said. "We could also have a force to intervene in the Balkans and another to intervene in the European states."

Labour leaks 'woolly' White Paper

Fiction challenge over Dorrell's NHS casebooks

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR leaked a draft of a Government White Paper yesterday, to pre-empt an attempt to persuade the electorate that the health service was safe in Tory hands.

The White Paper, to be launched today by Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, commits the Government to a universal free health service funded from taxation. It uses nine fictitious case histories to exemplify the best the NHS can offer and to set a gold standard of care.

However, Labour accused Mr Dorrell of "personal electioneering" and issued its own list of seven allegedly real-life cases demonstrating the NHS failings. Chris Smith, the Shadow Health Secretary, said paper was an abuse of civil servants' time, and that its only purpose was to advance Mr Dorrell's candidature for Tory leader after the election.

"It contains no proposals for either legislative or executive action. It is merely a set of woolly aspirations and this is perhaps why he is slighting the House of Commons, by refusing to make a ministerial statement," he said.

In its draft version, the White Paper pledges that the NHS will remain a universal free service, funded from taxation. It rejects warnings, notably from Sir Duncan Nichol, former NHS chief executive, that demographic pressures and rising expectations will render it unaffordable without extra, private sources of funds.

The paper says: "The Gov-



Smith: "People won't recognise this NHS"

in the NHS today. These studies demonstrate the kind of care which people can expect to receive when we achieve our ambitions for the NHS."

The cases range from a young man injured in a road accident, who receives prompt neurosurgical treatment, to an elderly woman with a painful hip who gets a well-planned replacement operation with full post-operative care.

Mr Smith said: "This White Paper describes an NHS that many people simply will not recognise. It is the stuff of fairy tales and offers no solutions to the real problems."

In the White paper, Garry Hunter, 22, is trapped inside his car after an accident. A farmer dials 999 and a paramedic arrives within eight minutes. The patient is taken to hospital where the trauma team assesses his condition, transmit a brain scan to another hospital with a specialist neurosurgery unit to which he is promptly transferred for surgery.

In Labour's example, Malcolm Murray, 45, was badly injured after being hit by a van in March 1994. He was taken by ambulance to Queen Mary's hospital, Sidcup, Kent, where a brain scan revealed he needed specialised neurosurgery. Nearby hospitals were full and a bed was eventually found 200 miles away in Leeds. Mr Murray was flown to Leeds by helicopter and underwent surgery eight hours after he was first admitted to hospital in Kent, but died next day.

It says that priorities must be set and difficult choices made, but it rules out rationing of services at a national level, on the ground that blanket bans on treatments undermine clinical freedom, and that for every treatment there are always some patients who may benefit.

A series of illustrative examples, with named patients, chart the ideal service the Government wishes to see. The White Paper says: "The people in the case studies are fictitious, but the description of the care they receive is based on the very best of current practice, the elements of which are already available



A "very lucky" Simon Willmott leaving the Royal Brompton Hospital yesterday

Concrete slab victim given 50-50 chance walks out of hospital

A MOTORIST who was critically injured when his car was hit by a slab of concrete walked out of hospital yesterday. His consultant said Simon Willmott was a "very lucky young man".

Mr Willmott, 22, had spent

two weeks in intensive care

after the block, thrown from a bridge over the M3 near Hook, Hampshire, smashed

through his car windscreen and hit his chest, causing complex injuries. At one stage of his time in the intensive care units at two hospitals, doctors said that his chances of survival were fifty-fifty.

As he eschewed the use of a wheelchair to leave the Royal Brompton Hospital in south-west London, he told nurses:

"I appreciate everything you have all done for me."

He got into a hospital car which took him to his local hospital at Camberley, Surrey. Frimley Park, where he was originally taken after his injury on October 17. Kim Fox, consultant cardiologist, said: "I think he is aware of how lucky he is. It could have gone the other way."

Colonel Gaddafi, who has boasted of supplying arms to the IRA, singled out Britain, which was engaged in a civil war "with bombs and guns in the middle of London". Perhaps we need a force to intervene in Britain?" he said.

"We could also have a force to intervene in the Balkans and another to intervene in the European states."

Message aimed more at home front than battle in Europe

BRUSSELS threatening jobs versus minimum holidays: John Major and Tony Blair both believe they can turn the argument over the working time directive to advantage. This is little to do with the merits of the directive — which British ministers did not oppose in the past, as Sir David Steel pointed out yesterday. It is more about which issues move votes. The electoral impact depends on how the argument is framed.

The Tories want the debate to be about national rights against Brussels' intrusion, not just over yesterday's ruling — which allows many exemptions — but about whether it

would open the way to similar legislation that might undermine job creation. The Government has to play the nationalist card to make the competitiveness case. The Tories reckon that they will gain from a confrontation with Brussels — no deal on anything at the inter-governmental conference without a treaty amendment to ensure that the working time directive does not apply in Britain and that no similar legislation can be imposed upon Britain. By contrast, Labour wants to focus on the right of working families to have three weeks' paid holiday a year and not to have to work for more than an average of 48

hours a week unless they want to do so. Labour emphasises the flexibility in the directive rather than the European aspect. In particular, Labour leaders want to play down the pressure for more regulations from the European Parliament and parts of the Brussels Commission. Mr Blair and Gordon Brown interpret "social Europe" in minimalist, fairness terms. But there are weaknesses in Labour's claims that Britain can resist measures that would add to business costs, especially if we sign up to the social

chapter. Europe has been a double-edged issue for the Tories. Their policies have in the past been preferred by the public, but they have recently suffered from their deep disunity. To his frequent frustration, Mr Major has been unable to gain much from his European battles. Five years ago, at the same stage of the last parliament, MORI gave the Tories an 18-point lead over Labour as the party having the best policies on Europe. Labour had turned this into a six-point lead by spring 1994 and they

retained a two-point lead over the Tories this summer.

However, taking a strong line on Europe may be a way that the Tories can win back wavering voters. While only one in ten voters regards Europe as the most important issue facing Britain today, according to MORI, 18 per cent of Tory supporters and 16 per cent of those who have switched away from the Tories since the last election do. It is third in list of importance for these switchers, while it is rated as the most important issue by just 6 per cent of Labour loyalists.

The problem for Mr Major is that the Government has in the past had

to compromise with its own sceptics and the rest of Europe — from the battles on qualified majority voting to this summer's mishandled confrontation over beef exports. But Mr Major has two tactical advantages now: first, that his own party is united, bar a handful of committed pro-Europeans; and, secondly, that his brinkmanship can be stretched beyond the next election. The conclusion of the IGC will be next June. So most of what we heard yesterday, and will hear until next spring, was aimed at British voters, not other European leaders.

PETER RIDDELL

Major pledges to reverse 48-hour week

Continued from page 1
sue, apparently pleasing strategists in both main parties. Tony Blair immediately squared up to the Prime Minister in the Commons, asking if he would fight the next election on the slogan: Vote Tory for no right to a holiday.

Mr Major, who sees Labour's stance as a means of showing it is in favour of more regulation and, therefore, a threat to jobs, declared: "Britain wants good jobs, not worthless directives."

A handful of pro-European Tories voiced concern about his hard line, but

Mr Major said: "I will not accept what has been determined by the courts today and when we reach the end of the IGC I shall demand a change or there will be no end of the IGC."

As Mr Blair swiftly pointed out, the IGC is not due to end until next June, after the British general election. He claimed Mr Major was already looking for an "escape route". However, senior ministers made plain that Mr Major's tough line would be evident at the Dublin summit next month.

Ministers called the ruling the "thin

end of the wedge" and said if Britain did not act to close the loophole a raft of new EU social legislation would be introduced by the same route.

One small government victory was

the court finding that the compulsory rest day need not be a Sunday.

About five million public sector workers will be covered by the ruling from November 23, but most already

have similar or more favourable agreements.

John Monks, the TUC General Secretary, called the ruling "great

news". Adair Turner, the CBI Director-General, said it was "legislation at its worst".

Brussels officials were delighted. "This is a good day for social Europe and for those who believe employees should have the right to say no to excessive working hours," said Padraig Flynn, Social Affairs Commissioner.

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See page 43 for further details

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Six years' jail for trusted cleric who passed on details of boys he had abused

Paedophile priest sent porn on the Internet

REPORTS BY PAUL WILKINSON AND RUTH GLEDHILL

A ROMAN Catholic priest sexually abused boys in his parish and used the Internet to pass details of what he had done to fellow paedophiles around the world.

Father Adrian McLeish, 45, held the largest known collection of illicit matter yet gathered electronically. He had amassed a vast store of obscene pictures and drawings in his presbytery and exchanged thousands of explicit e-mail messages with other paedophiles.

McLeish, priest at St Joseph's church in Gilesgate, Durham, was jailed yesterday by Newcastle upon Tyne Crown Court for six years. His activities were exposed a year ago as police set up an international inquiry into the distribution of paedophile material by computer.

When he was arrested, McLeish tried to hide the depth of his involvement, telling police that he had only a minor interest in child pornography and had sent one or two indecent photographs to people on the Internet. Officers seized four computers that he had built himself and began examining a huge library of disks, many of which had been erased.

McLeish had two hard disks which he referred to as his "nice disk" and his "naughty disk". In the days leading up to his arrest he destroyed numerous pornographic files and a number of videotapes he had bought in Amsterdam.

On the night before his arrest, on December 19 last year, he downloaded more than 100 pornographic pictures, a task which took him from midnight until 2am. When police arrived at 3am they had all been wiped. Police sent the disks to Paul Hicks, a forensic scientist based in Wetherby, Yorkshire, who managed to retrieve much of the information.

Yesterday McLeish admitted 12 specimen charges of

indecent assaults against two 10-year-old boys, one aged 12 and another aged 16. He also admitted distributing indecent photographs, possessing them with intent to distribute them and being involved in the importation of pornographic videos of children.

To his parishioners, McLeish was a well-respected figure and the families of his victims had trusted him implicitly. After his arrest he went to see each of the boys and asked them not to betray him. One was told that he was thought of as homosexual if he spoke to anyone.

Beatrice Bolso, for the prosecution, said: "All four boys came from families who were involved with the Catholic Church and who had a great personal liking and trust for McLeish. They were quite content to allow their children to spend time with him, including staying the night in some cases, sure they would be safe in his hands."

"The boys are finding it extremely difficult to come to

terms with the breach of trust and the loyalty they felt towards the priest. They all want to get on with their lives, but it's another matter whether they will be able to do not."

"One boy wants to move house because he is aware that his address was circulated on the Internet. The boys have all had bad dreams and their behaviour has changed."

Mr Justice Moses told

McLeish: "You corrupted those children and damaged them emotionally. You and other paedophiles like you, dangerously, delude yourselves if you think there is one iota of care, affection or even thought for those children. There is none."

The Right Rev Ambrose Griffiths, Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, said after the case: "Father McLeish has betrayed the trust placed on him and I am shocked and disheartened by his actions. I apologise unreservedly for what he has done and the great harm he has caused to individual children, their fam-

ilies and the parish of St Joseph's."

McLeish trained for the priesthood at Ushaw College in Durham in the early 1970s. He first offended in 1989, when he was a junior priest in Wallsend, Tyneside. He befriended a 12-year-old boy and kissed and cuddled him before enticing him into sex acts while showing him pornographic videos of men.

In 1991 burglars tipped off police that they had found the videos at the presbytery, but McLeish denied any connection. Soon afterwards, he moved to Durham but he said that there was no link between the burglary and his decision to switch churches.

The police discovered that McLeish was linked to the Internet through at least four different companies and had a privacy program so that his communications could not be read by anyone else. His private code was "Overhead the moon is beaming".

McLeish admitted corresponding with a German paedophile and sending him indecent photographs of boys of 14. He also admitted swapping pictures of 18-year-olds with an American named Mike Rhinehart, and receiving pictures from a Jan Erich in Sweden.

Miss Bolso said: "The correspondent from his computer demonstrates he was a paedophile involved in an international paedophile ring on the Internet, in which he connected regularly with at least nine other people in Sweden, Germany, France, New Zealand and the USA."

Police have passed information on up to 20 men gleaned from the priest's files to the National Crime Intelligence Service's paedophile unit. They include a teacher, a doctor, a psychologist, a student and a computer expert. One also worked as a child's outfitter.

A team of four policemen,



Father Adrian McLeish: he admitted four charges of indecent assault on boys

led by Detective Inspector Jeff Watson, spent seven months reading thousands of pages of pornographic material from McLeish's files. Mr Watson, who has two teenage children, said he and colleagues were appalled by some of the things they discovered. "There were 2,000 pictures stored on just one high-powered disk. The written stuff was probably worst of all."

"Without doubt this has had an effect on us. You cannot look at that many pictures and read so much horrendous stuff

and not be affected by it. Every person who was talking to him on the Internet had some child that they were abusing. We have seen pictures of children from America who we know were being abused."

"I feel very sorry for the boys he's attacked. These children have really gone through it, bearing in mind that a priest to many people in the Catholic Church is a very powerful person. McLeish misused the priesthood and betrayed his family, although devastated by this, is continuing to support him."

still feels he is responsible for sending this man to prison and he still loves him."

David Robson, QC, in mitigation, said: "This is a tragic case because there is no doubt he was a highly intelligent man. He was head of his year at school and was a fine musician and noted for his musical activities. He was also, as far as the world knew, a fine parish priest. He was from a highly religious background and his family, although devastated by this, is continuing to support him."

"Adrian McLeish will be permanently suspended from the priesthood and will never be able to take up a job with children again. The Church will be waiting for him when he comes out of prison and will offer him the best treatment possible at a special psychological unit for sexual offenders."

One of the families has put its

home up for sale after graffiti alleging things their son had done was sprayed on walls near by. However, they have been unable to find a buyer. Detective Inspector Jeff Watson, who led the police inquiry, said: "They are trapped there, living near to the church, in a house they cannot sell with a mortgage they do not want. They have not been back to the church since this happened and the mother has suffered a great deal of ill health recently." Another family had been rehoused by the council.

Victims' families intend to sue Catholic Church for damages

THE families of at least three of the children abused by Father Adrian McLeish are to bring a private damages action against the Roman Catholic Church.

Charles McCain, a solicitor representing the families of three of the boys, said: "The children and their families have suffered unimaginable harm at the hands of Adrian McLeish and their lives have been torn apart. It is impossible to say how long it will take for their lives to be repaired as a result. Legal aid has been agreed

and I have been instructed to pursue a claim for damages."

"It is hoped that the church authorities will be good enough to deal with this case quickly and to place few obstacles in their way, so they can get on with rebuilding their lives. Contrary to what has been said in court today, the families believe they have been offered very little support and help by the Church for what they have had to endure."

The mother of one of the boys said: "I can't believe he's only got

six years. We have been to hell and back, our lives have been destroyed. My son will never be the same again and both his and my health have suffered as a consequence of this."

The boys and their families have been receiving counselling since the beginning of the year, when local church authorities first learnt of McLeish's activities. Father Dennis Tindall, a child protection officer for the Hexham and Newcastle diocese, said that even those closest to McLeish did not

suspect that anything was amiss until the police raided the presbytery. None of the boys had complained to their parents or reported what had been done to them until after the raid.

He said: "All this came to light just before Christmas last year. Over the ensuing weeks, as they managed to debar the computers, we began to realise the scale of what we were dealing with."

"Even the people who worked closely with him never suspected anything like this. I have worked

closely with the parents since then, and the church support services have been made available to the families and any other parishioners who have been hurt by this."

"Adrian McLeish will be permanently suspended from the priesthood and will never be able to take up a job with children again. The Church will be waiting for him when he comes out of prison and will offer him the best treatment possible at a special psychological unit for sexual offenders."

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Jockey tells of lovesick worker's threat to murdered stablegirl

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A JOCKEY spoke yesterday of a chilling remark made by a farmworker who had an unrequited love for a stablegirl. Jimmy Frost said the man had vowed that "if she had anybody else, he would kill her".

The National Hunt jockey told Exeter Crown Court that he had brushed off the remark lightly, but added: "It felt as if it was meant seriously."

A few months later, the stable girl, Jessie Hurlstone, 21, was found battered to death with 30 injuries, after returning from a drink with another man. The farmworker, Stephen Webber, 39, denies murdering her at Hawson Stables, near Buckfastleigh, south Devon, owned by Mr Frost's father.

The court had been told that Mr Webber was always trying to help Miss Hurlstone, gave her gifts and had even made a will leaving his home and possessions to her, but she wanted only friendship. Mr Frost, son of the National Hunt trainer Richard Frost, told the jury that Mr Webber, whom he had known since youth, discussed Jessie with him on more than one occasion. "He made it pretty clear he had strong feelings for her," he said.

Miss Hurlstone had worked there for about 4½ years and was "dedicated, cheerful and enjoyed her job". He and Mr Webber were working together in the summer of last year when the farmworker allegedly made the remark about killing her.

Valerie Frost, the jockey's mother, recalled that Mr Webber had questioned her about the stablegirl's movements. When Christopher



The "dedicated" stablegirl, Jessie Hurlstone, the jockey Jimmy Frost, left, and Stephen Webber



Wilson-Smith, QC, for the defence, suggested that Mr Webber appeared to be quite fond of her. Mrs Frost said: "Not necessarily fond. He tried to possess her."

Mr Wilson-Smith said: "He was basically like a little adoring puppy towards Jessie." Mrs Frost replied: "Yes, running around after her trying to do things for her. She let him do it, yes." The stablegirl who found the body, Jessica

prosecution, said that the killing stemmed "from the oldest motive in the world — if I cannot have her, no one can".

Mr Webber was said to have planned the attack, carried out after he walked across fields to the woman's caravan, picking up an iron bar which, the court heard, was used by Richard Frost to load silage bales.

Miss Hurlstone had been to a pub on October 20 last year, with a man she had been seeing for a couple of weeks. She went to the main house after 11pm to ask Richard Frost to walk her to her caravan, a request she had never made before, the trainer told the jury.

She was found beaten to death at her caravan. Her injuries included ten major head wounds, one of which penetrated her brain. Mr Webber was said to have admitted the killing in a second police interview, saying he wanted to "get his own back" for the way she had made him "look small".

He allegedly smashed the window and got into the caravan. She had woken and said: "What are you doing here?" He is alleged to have replied: "I am here to teach you a lesson."

The police statement continued: "I know I had the bar in my hand but that was to frighten her. The plan was not to hit her." But he was in a temper: "I hit her so much I was out of puff."

Afterwards, Mr Webber allegedly drove home, got out of his bloodstained clothing, then drove to a friend's house where he had a bath, changed and dumped the weapon and soiled clothes. The trial continues today.

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JULIE 120

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College was set to field woman in men's eight until rowing officials put their oar in

Cambridge team loses girl with pulling power

By RUSSELL JENKINS

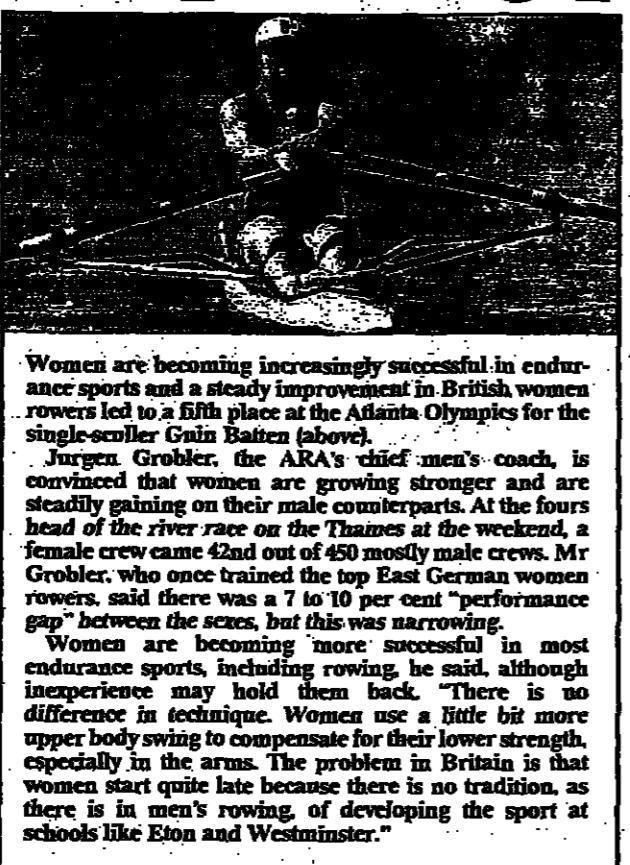
A NEW rower seemed like an ideal find for a Cambridge University men's eight. The fifth student weighed in at 11½ stone and had plenty of pulling power. Nobody minded that she was female.

Jenny Fox proved herself in intensive training with the Blues Development Squad during the summer. It was only when she was selected for a race that the team thought they had better confirm there would be no problems with the Amateur Rowing Association.

Last night her short career in men's rowing was at an end after the ARA emphasised that men's teams were still for men only and that mixed teams were allowed only at specific events.

Miss Fox, a 19-year-old veterinary student from Twickenham, west London, said: "It is ridiculous. I am basically taller than some of the men's eight and nearly on a par with strength, but I am not allowed to row."

She was introduced to rowing last year as a first-year student and is the powerhouse of most women's crews with whom she rows. She enjoyed four weeks' intensive training in July and Mike Rogers, the Robinson College captain, tested his new recruit's prowess with several punishing work-outs on the river. It was thought that there was no



Women are becoming increasingly successful in endurance sports and a steady improvement in British women rowers led to a fifth place at the Atlanta Olympics for the single-sisser Gail Batten (above).

Jürgen Grobler, the ARA's chief men's coach, is convinced that women are growing stronger and are steadily gaining on their male counterparts. At the fours head of the river race on the Thames at the weekend, a female crew came 42nd out of 450 mostly male crews. Mr Grobler, who once trained the top East German women rowers, said there was a 7 to 10 per cent "performance gap" between the sexes, but this was narrowing.

Women are becoming more successful in most endurance sports, including rowing, he said, although inexperience may hold them back. "There is no difference in technique. Women use a little bit more upper body swing to compensate for their lower strength, especially in the arms. The problem in Britain is that women start quite late because there is no tradition, as there is in men's rowing, of developing the sport at schools like Eton and Westminster."

upset because I was looking forward to it. If anything, a woman rowing in a men's boat is a disadvantage, whilst a man rowing in a woman's boat, would be a clear advantage.

"I have comparable

strength with some in the boat, but the training with the university really helped to improve my technique.

"I think the ban is a bit silly really. Our boat captain wanted to put out the best eight. Someone was injured and I was the replacement. I don't see why I should not be allowed to race."

A spokesman for Robinson College said: "We are annoyed to lose her because she has been training very hard with us. It is a shame that she is not allowed to row in the event under the ruling system that we use."

Rosemary Napp, ARA national manager, said that the heads-of-river races — begun originally as winter time trials — were governed by the association's rules, which outlawed mixed crews apart from specific events.

She said that the rules of the sport were being rewritten and moves to break down the gender barriers were currently before the ARA council.

Miss Fox now intends to concentrate on the college women's eight. During term time, she can manage only three early-morning sessions on the river each week, because she has to concentrate on her studies.

She believes that women are getting better and stronger. "There is still quite a big gap but there are women coming up who are amazing," she said.



Jenny Fox in action. She said: "I am taller than some of the men's eight"

SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



TOP 20 WINES AT UNDER £5

Part two of Jane MacQuitty's 100 Winter Wines, in the Magazine

WIN A TRIP TO DISNEYLAND

A young Times reader's chance to take 25 friends to Europe's favourite theme park, in 1015

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Cambridge was Said's first choice for donation

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR



WAFIC SAID, the Middle East businessman who has pledged £20 million to establish a business school at Oxford University, offered the money first to his alma mater of Cambridge. *The Times* closes today.

In an interview, Mr Said says that his donation — one of the biggest to a British university — would have gone to Cambridge had it not already begun work on its own school. Cambridge's school was named after its principal donor, Sir Paul Judge.

Mr Said has given Oxford until February to reach agreement on a site for the £40 million school that will bear his name. Dons rejected a plan to build on the University Club playing fields at last week's meeting of Congregation, the dons' parliament, but there will be a postal ballot of staff if an alternative site cannot be found by next term.

Professor John Kay, who is

to head the School of Management Studies, said he would call off his move to Oxford if there was no agreement. "I am less demanding about the timetable because it might be that there were other solutions the university could explore, but I have always said my appointment was conditional on the scheme going through." Professor Kay said he was not aware of other sites in central Oxford that would be suitable. "People have looked before and not come up with anything."

David Wilson, the chief executive of the Radcliffe Infirmary, ruled out the hospital as an alternative site for the school. The ten-acre site has been a target for the university, but the hospital is not expected to move until 1992 and the business school is planned to open in 1998.

Valerie Grove, page 17

Oil disaster pilot clears his name

By JONATHAN PAYNN

THE pilot of the *Sea Empress* oil tanker, which ran aground off Milford Haven in February, spilling thousands of tons of oil, has been cleared of incompetence after an appeal.

John Pearn, 34, who was responsible for guiding the 147,000-tonne ship towards a Texaco oil refinery when it struck rocks, was demoted by a disciplinary tribunal in June and banned from piloting vessels over 90,000 tonnes.

The ban was lifted yesterday by the harbour authority, which accepted his defence that he had calculated the ship's course correctly, but other unknown factors had contributed to the vessel running aground.

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Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, did not say (report, November 11) that "a clash between the judiciary and Government over sentencing would dominate the run-up to the General Election". He did not describe the Home Secretary's sentencing plans as a recipe for "tensions" and "unhappiness and challenge"; these remarks referred to the possible operation of the proposed new system of re-trial. We apologise for the errors.

■ A photograph accompanying a report yesterday on Dr Robert Fine, a lecturer who is seeking an injunction in the High Court against Mrs Eileen McLardy, was not of Mrs McLardy but of a woman entirely unconnected with the case. We apologise to those concerned.

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Prophet of doom says deadly collision is inevitable and could destroy half the world's population

Scientist accuses Britain of ignoring asteroid threat

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

HALF the world's population could be snuffed out by a doomsday asteroid — and Britain is doing nothing about it, according to an astronomer. "It isn't a matter of if, it's a matter of when," Dr Duncan Steele told a meeting at the British National Space Centre in London yesterday.

"We know of at least 200 craters on Earth caused by impacts," he said. "The chances that one will hit us is a low-probability event, but it's also a high-consequence event." Dr Steele said that Britain had done nothing, despite a call from the Council of Europe to take the threat seriously.

He estimates that an asteroid large enough to kill a quarter and maybe as much as half of the world's population strikes on average once every 100,000 years. Given the number killed, that means that the risk to the average person of dying in this way is

TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

Since the search for near-Earth asteroids began, a number of near-misses have been recorded:

- January 17 1991: an asteroid nine metres across passes within 100,000 miles of Earth — less than half the distance to the Moon.
- May 20 1993: an asteroid between five and 11 metres across misses Earth by 80,000 miles. It isn't spotted until it has already passed.
- 1994: two asteroids pass less than 100,000 miles from the Earth.
- 1995: a really big asteroid, 1989 FC, which may have been 500 metres across, comes within 450,000 miles. It sounds like a long way, but the Earth had been in that exact spot just six hours earlier.

one in 5,000 — four times as great as the chances of being killed in an air crash.

Smaller asteroid impacts are much more common, but their consequences are less extreme. In 1908 an object estimated to be just 30 metres in diameter struck Siberia and laid waste an area of forest more than 30 miles across.

Events like this may occur once a century. Most are likely to be over the oceans or

relatively uninhabited land, but a direct hit on a city could cause huge destruction.

The astronomers at the meeting agreed that the chances of a collision were small but that the subject demanded further study. In spite of strong calls from some present, however, they stopped short of urging more spending to investigate the threat or ways of preventing it.

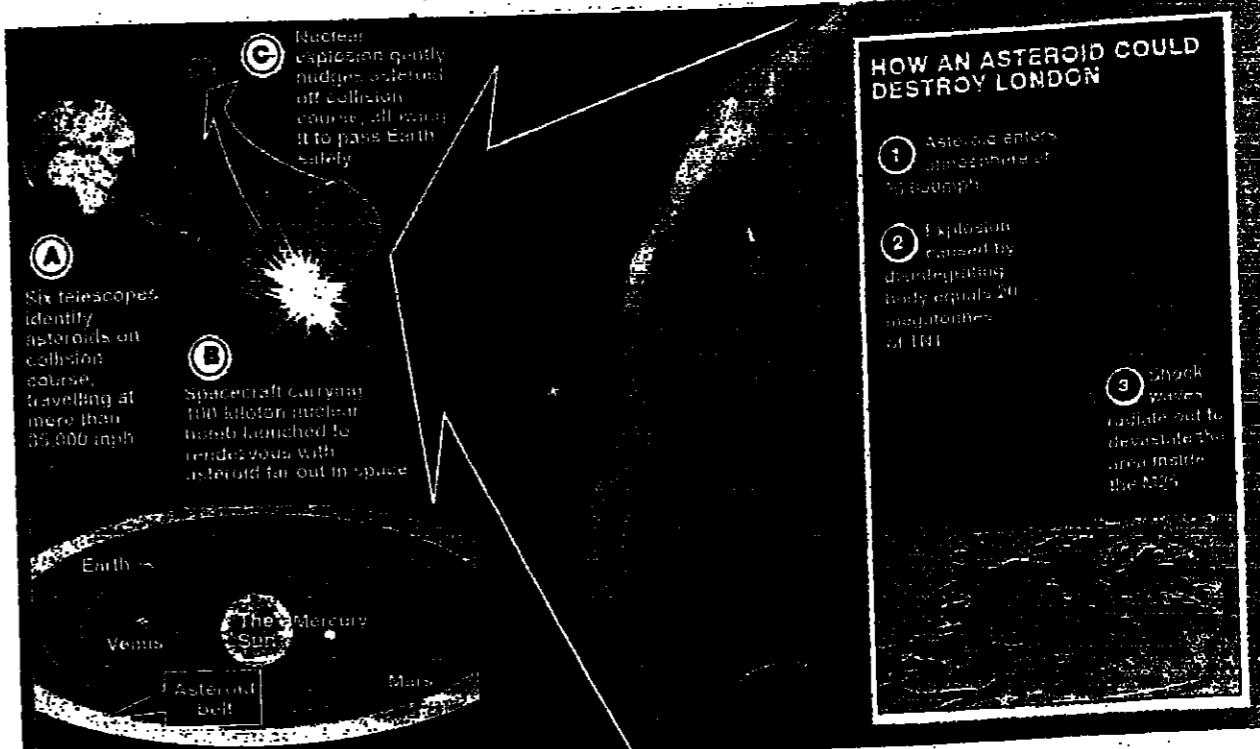
After years as a fringe

activity, searching for doomsday asteroids and wayward comets has become respectable. Earlier this year, the US government launched a programme, and France, Germany and Italy have all responded to the Council of Europe's call, made in March.

Last week Edward Teller, the American scientist often described as the father of the hydrogen bomb, wrote to the British and Australian Prime Ministers to express concern over lack of action.

Dr Steel has personal reasons for trying to raise the temperature, as his grants — from the Australian Government and the US Air Force — to conduct an asteroid search from an Anglo-Australian telescope in New South Wales, end at the end of this year.

"Once that finished there won't be any observations made from the Southern Hemisphere," he says. He believes that a full surveillance programme could be set up with six two-metre telescopes, each costing about



\$5 million. Money spent on diverting asteroids would be justified only if one was identified on a collision course, he says: "Surveillance costs very little, prevention a lot."

If one were identified shortly before it hit, nothing could be done. But a greater likelihood is that it would be identified many orbits in ad-

vance of an actual collision,

allowing time to plan how to deal with it. The favoured solution would be to launch a rocket armed with a nuclear warhead and explode it close to the asteroid. The idea is not to break it up, which could cause even more trouble, but to generate enough thrust to push it off its collision course

with Earth.

"People say it's science fiction, but it's not," Dr Steel insists. "We have got to take it seriously. There's plenty of expertise in Britain, but the Government is doing nothing."

One of three meteorites from Mars expected to fetch millions of dollars at an auc-

tion next week was acquired

from the Natural History Mu-

seum, it emerged yesterday.

The meteorite would have

been swapped with private

buyer for other valuable mate-

rial before the prospect of life

on the planet was raised by

Nasa scientists.

Alan Coren, page 18

Doctors grapple with drinking problem in court

By ADRIAN LEE

ONE OF the few points on which experts agreed in the High Court yesterday, as they grappled with the case of an executive whose drinking habit cost him a job, was that deciding exactly what constituted an alcohol problem was a difficult task.

Did Peter Baker's estimated weekly intake of four bottles of wine and a self-confessed drinking spree in Monte Carlo make him unemployable?

Mr Baker, 53, is suing the doctor who believed the answer was yes and, after a medical, recommended he should not get a £45,000-a-year international sales post with NBC Europe. Dr Georges Keye estimated Mr Baker consumed 35 units of alcohol a week and concluded that drinking was responsible for an abnormal blood test.

Brian Gazzard, a consultant physician at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, told the court that an alcohol level of 35 units — a unit is equivalent to half a pint of beer — was not in itself dangerous. However, the doctor, who gave his colleague Dr Keye a second opinion in February 1991 and agreed with his diagnosis, said that coupled with the TV festival in Monte Carlo, when Mr Baker drank a bottle of wine a day, it was indicative of a pattern often seen in people who drink but claimed not to.

Dr Keye, of Kensington, west London, told the court that Mr Baker's drinking was excessive, according to the then recognised ceiling of 21 units a week for men and 14 for women. In any case, the

blood tests indicated that Mr Baker had seriously underestimated his intake.

He said that Mr Baker's guarded replies when questioned about his drinking also played a part in his decision.

NBC's parent company, General Electric Technical Services, took a strict view on alcohol. Dr Michael Rehman of New York, a former director of General Electric's medical centre in America, said the company had become less tolerant of alcohol in the late 1980s. "There was a recognition that alcohol interfered with executive decision-making ability. They made errors involving hundreds of millions of dollars."

Professor Neil McIntyre, professor of medicine at the Royal Free Hospital in north London, did not believe Mr Baker's alcohol intake to be exceptional. "I would have thought 35 units a week should not alarm anybody about a person's ability to function in a work capacity," he said.

Dr Anne Cockroft, director of the Royal Free's health and safety unit, said she did not believe a blood test of the type used was the best way of diagnosing an alcohol problem. She said sickness and absenteeism were far better indicators.

Mr Baker, of Great Bookham, Surrey, who now runs his own television distribution company, is claiming damages from Dr Keye over an alleged breach of his duty of care to make a proper assessment of his health.

The case continues.



Eileen McLardy and her husband Angus leaving the High Court in London last night

Stalking case student says tutor had affairs

By RICHARD DUCE

A WOMAN accused of stalking her university lecturer accused him yesterday of having affairs with other students.

Eileen McLardy, 50, told the High Court in London that she believed she was acting for womankind in bringing a sexual harassment claim against Dr Robert Fine, a senior sociology lecturer at Warwick University.

Her claim was dismissed by university authorities last year. By then, the court was told, Mrs McLardy had launched a vendetta against Dr Fine, including repeatedly staring through the windows of his house in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. At first

Mrs McLardy repeatedly refused to answer questions from Judge Thompson, QC, about the exact nature of her harassment claim. Eventually she said: "He looked like he was going to jump me. I felt a distinct sexual advance was made at me."

Mrs McLardy, of Coventry, said that by making her complaint, she believed Dr Fine would stop the harassment. "It didn't seem to work. He was having affairs with other doctors."

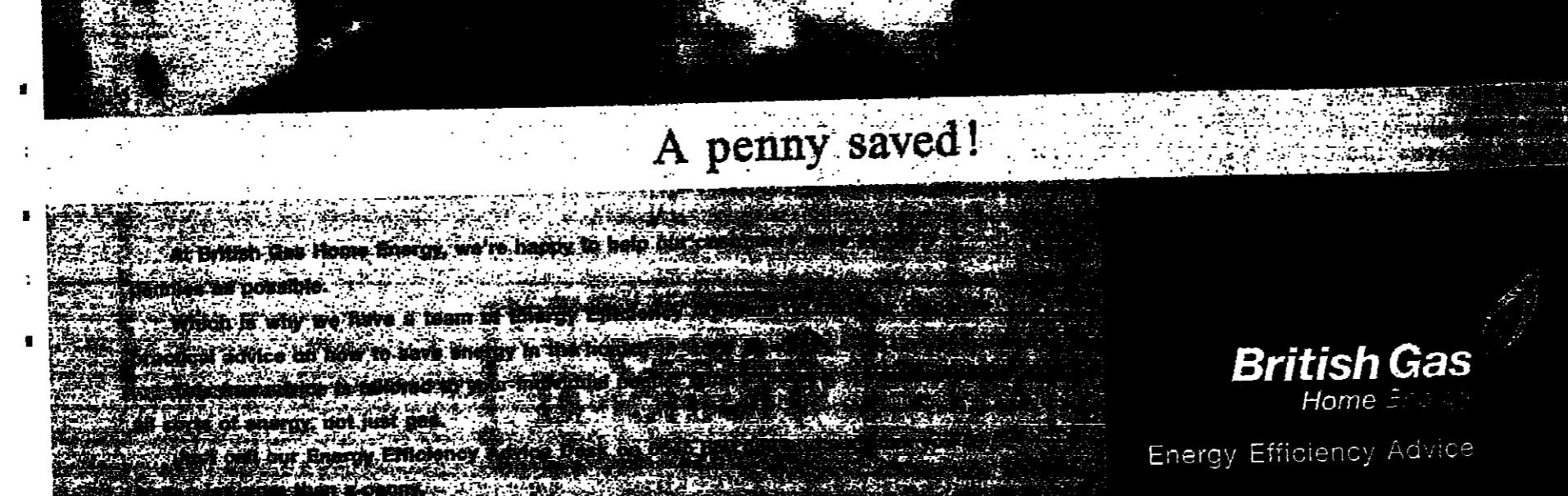
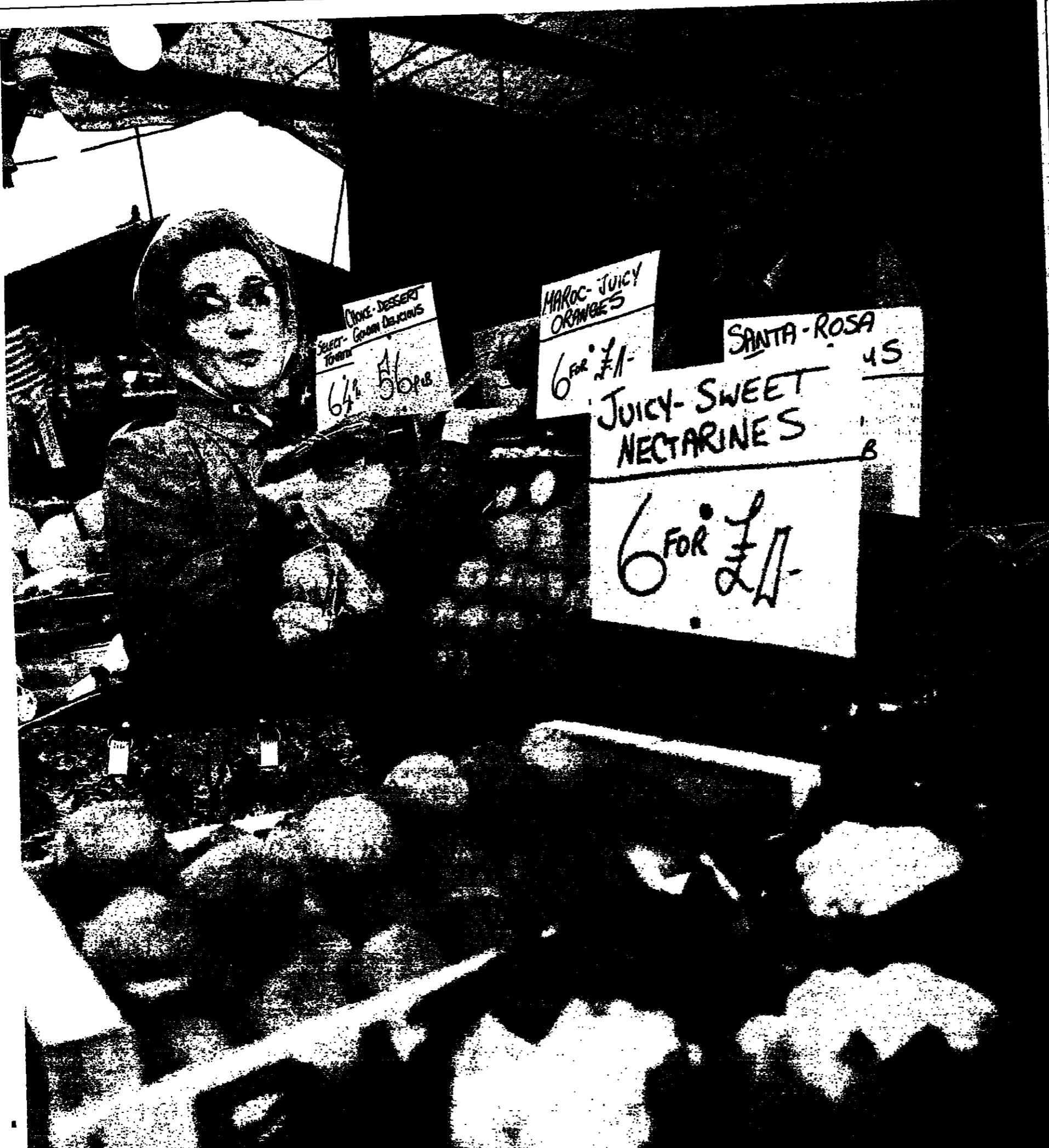
Dr Fine, 50, is seeking an injunction to prevent her molesting him at his home or work, and is seeking damages. The case continues.

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Europe delighted to see Britain pulled into line



BRITAIN was accused yesterday of trying to hold new European Union treaty negotiations to ransom with its offensive against the 48-hour maximum working week.

The European Commission said that John Major, who threatened to block further EU reforms if the ruling were not overturned, had little chance of reversing or winning exemption from the working-time directive.

Brussels officials and other member states were delighted by the European Court of Justice's decision to dismiss all of Britain's arguments in its appeal for the annulment of the 1993 working-time directive. As well as a maximum 48-hour week, it fixes a minimum of three weeks' paid holiday. "This is a good day for social Europe and a good day for those who believe that employees

should have the right to say 'no' to excessive working hours," Paddy Flynn, the Social Affairs Commissioner, said.

The court's only concession to Britain was to annul a provision inserted at Germany's request that had set Sunday as a rest day "in principle". The directive, passed by member states under single-market legislation that requires only majority approval, must be enacted as law by November 23.

The decision set the scene for a fresh battle at the inter-governmental conference (IGC), the current negotiations for a revised Maastricht treaty, at which Britain is already resisting a drive by other states to extend majority voting and deepen integration. Within hours of the court's decision Sir Stephen Wall, Britain's Ambassador to the EU and chief negotiator, tabled

■ The European Commission believes John Major has little chance of reversing yesterday's ruling on the working-time directive, Charles Bremner writes

proposals to the IGC to exempt Britain from the working-time directive and to make future health and safety legislation subject to unanimous voting among member states.

Mr Flynn welcomed the court's ruling that the EU was fully within its rights to legislate on working hours within a treaty article covering health and safety. The Luxembourg judges endorsed the EU argument that health and safety should be given a broad interpretation, covering the general well-being of workers. It rejected

Britain's other main claim that the EU had misused its powers and ordered Britain to pay costs.

The verdict has strengthened Mr Flynn's plans for new measures to end existing exemptions from the directive for wide categories, including transport workers and hospital staff. He declined to rule out the possibility that he would use the *health article* to introduce other types of social legislation, but insisted that he had "no hidden agenda".

Echoing a view voiced across the Continent, Mr Flynn deplored Mr

Major's intention to fight for an exemption from the directive and a treaty change on workplace laws as a condition for British assent to a new EU treaty at the IGC. "Now they are threatening to hold the IGC to ransom," he said. He ridiculed the Government's argument that the EU had enacted social legislation "through the back door" rather than including it in the social chapter, from which Britain has an opt-out. "The UK failed to obtain what it wanted through the front door and then failed by the back door insofar as the court action is concerned, and now they are attempting to break in through the IGC," he said.

Sir Leon Brittan, the Commission Vice-President, and other officials said it was conceivable that Britain could win a special exemption in the horse-trading of the final stages of the IGC next spring, but this could only come at the price of a British concession in some other field. "Until we can see the extent to which Britain is prepared to accommodate other people's interests, it's impossible to judge the success of Britain's own proposals on this issue or anything else," Sir Leon said.

There was palpable satisfaction around Europe that London had been hauled into line with its partners in a way that would rob it of some of the competitive edge enjoyed by British industry. Britain's relatively unregulated labour market is a source of widespread resentment and is often deemed to amount to what is known on the Continent as "social dumping".

Iain Duncan Smith, page 18
Leading article, page 19

Flynn: he may introduce other social legislation

Who will benefit and who won't: what the ruling says on hours, breaks, holidays and exemptions

Private firms must wait for ministers to pass new law

BY JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

SD million public sector workers will be the first to benefit from the 48-hour week. European directives apply instantly to state employees. Britain's 15 million workers in the private sector will have to wait several months until the Government incorporates the working-time directive into British law — if indeed it does.

From November 23, public workers and probably those working in newly privatised industries will have the right not to work for more than an average of 48 hours a week and will gain other rights.

Millions of workers are automatically exempt and the rest are free to work for more than 48 hours if they wish. Those who refuse an employ-

er's request to do so must not be "subjected to any detriment".

The six main provisions are:

□ Maximum average of 48 hours a week, including overtime, over an initial four months that could be extended to six or 12 months if the Government, employers and unions agree. This flexibility would, for example, allow workers to work longer hours through the summer. Four million people work more than 48 hours a week. The average working week is 43.7 hours.

□ Minimum rest period of 11 consecutive hours in 24.

□ Short break if working day is longer than six hours, length agreed between unions and employers or by law.

□ Minimum of one day a week, not necessarily Sunday.

□ Three weeks' annual paid leave, rising to four by 1999. Some 2.5 million people have



BUSINESS MANAGER

Anna Hawkins, 42, manages Safelight Multimedia Business Presentations, which employs 12 people and organises conference staging and audio-visuals. She is furious about the EU ruling and feels the business, owned by her brother, will be radically affected.

"When we organise a big conference our clients can do 48 hours in three days, working right through the night. With these new rules they will be able to refuse, so either we will have to pay them hefty overtime, which we can't afford, or we will take to employing freelances who will quote a set rate for getting the job done. The bottom line is that we cannot impose more charges on our clients and we will look for the cheapest option."

"It's crazy for the EU to dictate to us in this way, and I am urging John Major to revolt. Our business has to work in this erratic way. I frequently work from 9am to 9pm and I could tell my brother to stick it, but we all want to get the job done. This news isn't healthy for us or for British industry. There will be a lot of businesses shaking their heads today."

paid leave and six million have fewer than four weeks.

□ Night workers must not work more than an average eight hours in 24.

Exclusions apply automatically to people working in air, rail, road, sea, inland waterway and lake transport; sea

fishing and other work at sea; and doctors in training. A second group of workers is restricted to the right of paid annual leave; managing executives or others with autonomous decision-making powers; family workers; and people officiating at ceremonies.

nies in churches and religious communities.

A third group receive two rights: the 48-hour week and paid annual leave. They include people whose homes are "distant" from their work and others whose jobs involve "continuity of service"; sec-



RESTAURANT MANAGER

William Redwood manages a restaurant in southwest London. On average, he works a 60-hour week, which can increase when it is especially hectic, and earns £22,000 a year. He is exempt from the EU directives, but wishes he wasn't.

"In common with managers in most industries, I always work more than 48 hours in a week. Most of that is voluntary, on the basis that the job needs doing and won't go away if I don't deal with it. I don't have any choice, and I don't get paid overtime."

"It eats into your life, and it's got worse over the past few years, because there's a feeling that, if you won't do it, then plenty of others will step into your shoes. I am paid a salary, so working fewer hours wouldn't affect me financially, but it would improve my quality of life, which is more important."

"Despite many promotions, he was earning £3.79 an hour when he left. He is now working for another security firm which pays enough for him to work a 40-hour week. He fears that the directive is not in its solution. 'You would need a minimum wage, because the £1.70-an-hour person needs to do 100 hours to earn a half-decent wage.'

SECURITY GUARD

After 15 years of 100-hour weeks, Richie Owen decided enough was enough and left his job as a security guard in Newcastle upon Tyne, although only after his marriage and health had failed under the pressure. Mr Owen, 38, decided to quit when he clocked off at the end of one week and saw that he had been going for 101 hours and 45 minutes.

"I was working days and nights and my sleeping patterns were destroyed," he said. "I had one day off a week and then I had to catch up on sleep and I was too tired to take my children out. My ex-wife had to look after the kids seven days a week and my marriage collapsed. I was too tired to even argue. I will probably be on medication for the rest of my life because of a stomach complaint I got from my eating habits."

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POLICE CIVILIAN

Carol Lyle is a communications officer for Greater Manchester Police, working in weekly shift patterns on the emergency switchboard. "We are trying to work out if the rulings include us, or if we are exempt because we work for the emergency services. I hope to God the rules do apply, because shiftwork like ours is a nightmare."

"We have a really ridiculous shift pattern called the Ottawa system, so-called because it originated in Canada. It effectively means 10-hour shift patterns which average out to 37½ hours per week over a month, but in practice you can do 70 hours one week and 20 hours the next. It's ridiculous, particularly when you are doing nights, as it exhausts you and messes up your system. Especially if it ends up truncating your working life."

"I am salaried so it would be my quality of life that improved with restrictions on weekly working, but what price that? The guaranteed breaks are also welcome."

jobs with seasonal surges. The freedom to work more than 48 hours if agreed with employers could be overturned in seven years. The Council of Ministers will re-examine the exemption and could ban anyone working more than 48 hours.

Why long days are not always stressful for British workers

THE WORN faces of City workers who return home after a 12-hour day, or longer, have tugged at the heartstrings of our legislators in Brussels. The European Union, with our health in mind, has resorted to health and safety regulations to persuade employers that their employees will suffer if Britain continues to work such long hours.

Those who talk about the stress of long working hours are very often confusing two similar concepts, stress and anxiety. There is a difference. Anxiety is one of the causes of stress, and an overlong working day is one of the factors which can precipitate anxiety. It is not work which is necessarily stressful, but the

worker's reaction to it. Someone who really loves their job would not find working long hours taxing, as long as it did not cause domestic strife. Anything which causes anxiety is damaging to the health and anxiety at work from whatever cause leads to stress. The pity is that modern firms sometimes deliberately exacerbate anxiety. Producing some uncertainty at work may improve performance in the short term, but in the long term the anxiety it causes will precipitate stress, damaging health, reducing efficiency and taking away any pleasure in the job which would have made the long hours bear-

able.

Stress induced by the anxiety and unpredictability of life in modern industry has a bad effect on the cardiovascular system in general, and on blood pressure in particular. It raises the digestion, causes impotence, frigidity, and headaches. The long-term effect of these reactions to stress is to render the employee liable to heart attacks and strokes. It will also affect the immune system, and in consequence will increase the likelihood of malignancies and infections.

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ROLL ON CHRISTMAS

10 48-HOUR WEEK

Hours cut seen as recipe to boost profits in Germany

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

HELMUT K, a 66-year-old Rhinelander who refuses to claim a pension, started work at 7am yesterday and, fuelled by numerous lunch breaks and a seven-minute telephone call to Boris Yeltsin, was busy deep into the evening.

A typical day for Chancellor Kohl but not for German workers, who showed themselves bemused at British resistance to the European work-time directive.

"The British Government wants to fight for the right of bosses to order people to work for 48 hours?" asked a dazed official of the metalworkers' union, Herr Reinhold Peiler. "I thought the Conservatives were trying to stay in power."

The upholding by the European Court of Justice of the European Union directive, which Britain had argued did not apply to it under its negotiated opt-out, "strengthens the rights of British workers and stops countries from

undercutting others with looser labour regulation," said Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, a Social Democrat European expert.

"Once it wins the next election, the Labour Party will apply the Social Charter and assure more social security for British workers."

The main point of the European Court of Justice decision, she said, was that "it makes clear that Britain cannot play a special role in this question".

Employers and unionists yesterday agreed the issue of working hours was a strange battlefield for the British Government. Even hotel-owners — who may put receptionists on an early shift after they have worked at night — did not feel upset by the directive; those concerned get compensating time off and often prefer back-to-back shifts.

The focus of discussions about making Germany more competitive is on shortening,

rather than extending, working hours. Volkswagen workers agreed to a four-day, 29-hour week and smaller wages rather than accept 30,000 redundancies. Working time has to be apportioned more flexibly — including some weekends or late evenings — but the car workers seem willing to put up with that.

The modernisation and rejuvenation of the German steel industry hinges on a scheme that allows workers aged 54 or over to put in shorter weeks, their wage shortfall being made up by both Government and the employers until they retire at 65. That is cheaper than making them redundant and allows companies to hire younger workers.

New shopping hours, introduced on November 1, allow shops to open until 8pm on weekdays, and on Saturday afternoons. Greeted with initial suspicion, it is slowly

being accepted as a job-stimulating measure — part-time workers are being hired — and as a source of overtime as well as a way of increasing consumer spending.

The unions have been aiming for years for a 35-hour average week and in the engineering and electronic industries this is a reality, though workers have had to agree to inconvenient shifts.

Failure of opt-out, page 18
Leading article, page 19

Overtime remains unpopular, the average for manufacturing industry being 21 hours a week.

The bargaining power of German trade unions goes some way towards explaining how the goal of a shorter working week has been maintained over three decades. Originally, the unions saw it as a natural progression towards a "leisure society".

Now it is viewed as a way of saving jobs. The Government is not sure, divided between those wanting more deregulation to compete more effectively with Asian manufacturers, and those who believe a shorter week can increase flexibility and productivity.

Average weekly hours:

UK	43.9
Portugal	41.2
Spain	40.7
Greece	40.3
Ireland	40.2
Sweden	40
France	39.9
Germany	39.7
Austria	39.6
Luxembourg	39.5
Netherlands	39.5
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Sources: European Commission	

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BA crew relives terror of bus attack by Lusaka rioters

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

BRITISH Airways crew members, flown to Johannesburg for medical treatment, have told in terrifying detail how they were injured when attacked by rioting students throwing bricks and stones in the Zambian capital, Lusaka.

Heather Spencer, 34, a stewardess, was among 17 crew members injured in the attack outside the University of Zambia. She suffered a double fracture of the skull after being struck on the forehead by a flying brick and also had to have glass fragments removed from her eyes.

"We were travelling on a bus to our hotel when, without warning, a brick came crashing through the window and hit me," she said pointing to a livid gash and two swollen black eyes. "I was concussed and in shock and put my head down to avoid getting hit again."

"The pain was excruciating and all I remember was the captain screaming at the bus driver 'Keep driving, keep driving,'" she added. "From what I remember when we got to the hotel a doctor arrived to treat us. Later they decided to send us to Johannesburg."

Sitting on a bed next to her, Mike Nunn, 33, looking pale and drawn, was nursing a bandaged gash in his throat caused by flying glass and a small circular wound where he, too, had been hit in the forehead.

"It was frightening," he said. "As the windows

smashed around us it sounded like machinegun fire. There were people lined up all along the road throwing things and we did not know what was happening."

The captain thought I might have been shot in the head because of the shape of my wound, but I was later told it was caused by a corner of a brick," he added. "It all happened so quickly. At the hotel I remember someone shouting there was blood gushing from

A brick came crashing through the window of the bus and hit me. The pain was excruciating

my throat but it is all a bit sketchy."

The BA crew, making an overnight stop, were caught up in clashes between students and police as they travelled to the Intercontinental Hotel.

They were treated for facial cuts and bruises by a BA doctor before being flown to Johannesburg because local hospitals lacked special medical facilities. The crew are due to be allowed out of hospital tomorrow when they will re-

turn to Britain to convalesce. Maggie Bergasse, 28, another stewardess, who was bruised on the chin by a brick, said that she had spoken to her family by telephone. She praised BA for the way it had handled the situation.

She also mentioned how several Zambians had been sympathetic. "One man was very embarrassed by what had happened," she said. "He was distressed and kept apologising."

Zambia is tense in the run-up to disputed presidential elections on Monday. The university has been closed indefinitely after police used tear gas and batons to disperse hundreds of rioting students. Student leaders have rejected claims that the violence was politically linked, saying it was sparked by a hit-and-run road accident in which a student suffered a broken leg.

Crew staff were told yesterday morning to expect a visit from Dr Kenneth Kaunda, the former Zambian President controversially barred from participating in the elections, but hospital staff later said it had been cancelled.

Miss Spencer, a BA employee for nearly ten years, will have another scan before doctors decide if she is fit to travel. The incident will not deter her from returning to Zambia. "We were just in the wrong place at the wrong time," she said. "Riots happen all over the world."



First novel wins Goncourt prize

Pascale Roze, a first-time novelist, is jubilant after being awarded the Prix Goncourt, France's most coveted book prize which brings with it a cash award of just 50 francs (about £6) but carries enormous literary weight and the promise

death from an attack by a Japanese kamikaze pilot. Mme Roze, only the fourth debut novelist to win the award, said she would not suffer from the legendary writer's block that afflicts winners: "I've started another book already."

Guerrillas agree to pact ending 42-year civil war

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

THE Guatemalan Government and left-wing rebels have announced that they will sign a peace treaty next month to end Latin America's longest and most deadly civil war.

The agreement, which was brokered by the United Nations, will be signed in Guatemala on December 29, after the signing of a bilateral ceasefire in Oslo early next month. The ceasefire is one of 11 accords comprising the final peace treaty, including constitutional and electoral death squads.

Meanwhile, in the capital, thousands of labour leaders, students and intellectuals were murdered or "disappeared" after being abducted by military and civilian-allied death squads.

Many who fled the country began to return after civilian rule was restored in 1986. But the war, and the abuses, continued with lesser intensity, and the military still wielded enormous political power.

Four presidents have since struggled to curb the power of the military, but with only limited success. Peace talks began under UN auspices in 1991, but made only slow progress. President Arzu was elected in January this year, and quickly accelerated the pace of the peace talks.

Observers are confident that the agreement will mark the end of hostilities, but a threat may come from renegade elements of the military and guerrillas. Some officers within the military, with extreme right-wing civilian allies, are known to resent the handling of the peace negotiations.

The war pitched guerrillas of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG), who claimed to speak for an impoverished indigenous Indian peasantry, against the country's small, wealthy establishment of largely European descent. The fighting reached its most brutal phase in the early

Airline must pay £3m to 'human shields'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN PARIS

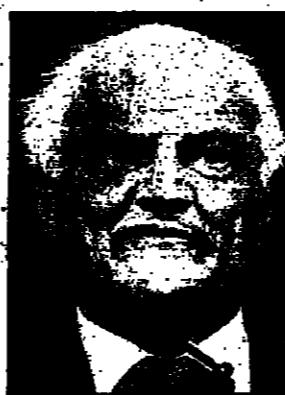
THE French appeal court yesterday upheld a ruling ordering British Airways to pay more than £3 million in compensation to passengers taken hostage when their aircraft landed in Kuwait hours after the Iraqi invasion in 1990.

Sixty-one French passengers and 120 crew members of France's national airline Air France claimed that BA had committed a "severe error" and exposed them to danger by allowing their Boeing 747 to land in Kuwait on August 2, four hours after Iraqi troops had invaded.

BA appealed, claiming it did not know the invasion was underway when the aircraft landed. It pointed out that the passengers had already received £4,000 compensation from a French state fund for victims of terrorism.

In its ruling yesterday the appeal court upheld the earlier verdict declaring BA "wholly responsible" for the mental suffering of the hostages and ordered the company to pay compensation totalling Fr26 million (£3.25 million).

Lawyers for the airline said that they would make a new appeal, this time to the Supreme Court,



Goldsmith faces challenge

FROM LEYLA LINTON
IN STRASBOURG

A CONSERVATIVE MEP yesterday called on Sir James Goldsmith, the millionaire and French MEP, to define his nationality.

Sir James has been deprived of his political platform in the European Parliament after his grouping, Europe des Nations, lost a member and had to dissolve. Anne-Christine Poisson defected from the

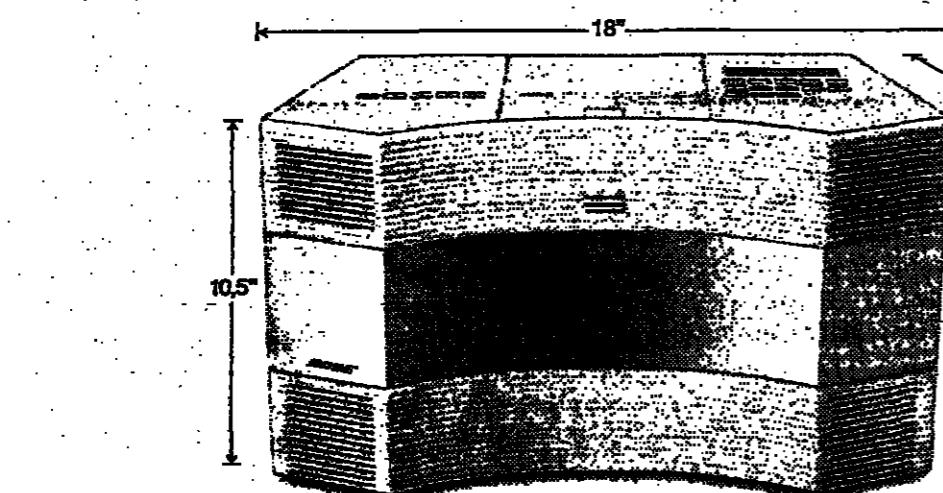
grouping after it was linked with far Right MEPs. Her departure meant that with only 17 members from three countries (France, Denmark and The Netherlands) the grouping had to disband according to European Parliament rules.

Edward McMillan-Scott, MEP for North Yorkshire, said: "As Sir James Goldsmith is standing for his other party (the Referendum Party), in the UK election he will be using his dual Franco-British nationality to stand as a Briton. We need to be sure that he cannot use his British nationality to reconstitute Europe des Nations."

Mr McMillan-Scott raised a verbal point of order and has written to Klaus Hänsch, president of the European Parliament, asking for an assurance that the nationality of members of political groupings is defined as the country that elected them as MEP.

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Taleban's rough justice wins approval from crime-plagued Kabul citizens

FROM ANTHONY LOYD
IN KABUL

TIED to a lamppost with wire and rags, whipped, bloody and beaten, the Kabul thief has only a short time before his right hand is severed.

His face is covered in black oil and blood and, to add to his humiliation, his Taleban captors have strung a pair of boots and a watering can around his neck. Near valueless Afghan rupees have been stuffed into his shirt collar where they emerge from the

fallen locks of his badly shorn hair like obscene petals. A small knife, which he apparently used to pick a doorlock, hangs among the medley of items.

Turbanned figures swirl around him whipping him with riding crops and cable flex as a jeering crowd of about a hundred people presses around him in a semi-circle. "I am a thief," the Taleban make him call out pathetically to the onlookers between thrashings. "Do not steal like me or your punishment will be even worse."

The Taleban are getting tough

on crime in the Afghan capital and their radical interpretation of *Sharia* (Islamic law) is one of seemingly rough and ready justice. However, the citizens of the city, used to years of lawlessness and criminal abuse, appear to have welcomed the Taleban's stand on law and the new security it offers for their lives.

"It is a good thing they do to this man," said a young student in the crowd. "We are sick of thieving and robbery here. Public spectacles like this mean we can rest at night and know we are safe."

While the Taleban fighters suddenly turn to beat back the pressing mass of people with rifle butts, a dwarf, withered with age, is allowed to step forward and abuse the thief. Yet the hapless crook, Kadam Ali, is aware his ordeal has only just begun. "I am guilty," he whispers to me. "I have stolen 950,000 rupees and more, and I have confessed."

Among the first of the city's thieves to be dealt with in this way by the new occupiers of Kabul, his public beating is only a preliminary to his punishment. Caught a

few days ago with a haul of copper pots and pans, an axe, cooking oil, rice, money, Persian plates and quills during his third trip to raid a merchant's empty house, Kadam was detained and questioned. He now faces three court appearances before Taleban holymen punish him with the amputation of his right hand.

Each court is presided over by three mullahs who are judges," explained Maulavi Ghulam Hassan, a senior Taleban figure from the Justice Department. "The first court decision is to comment on

the case and sentence. The mullahs must be in agreement. Under *Sharia* it is written that if the thief has stolen goods beyond a certain value, he shall have his hand amputated after a third court session which issues and confirms the verdict. Here the thief has confessed so it is a simple matter."

After the verdict the Taleban advertise the coming punishment on the radio, and the thief is taken to a public place. A doctor gives him a local anaesthetic, cuts off his hand, bandages the stump, and lets him go. Under the most

simplistic interpretation of the *Sharia* there are four possible punishments: the amputation of limbs for theft, beating by whips or imprisonment for minor offences, and execution for murder.

□ Sabotage claim: An armoured vehicle blew up outside the house of Mullah Muhammad Hassan, deputy leader of the ruling Taleban council in Kabul early yesterday. People working in the area claimed a limpet mine caused the explosion. Sabotage was a popular weapon of the Afghan Mujahidin. (Reuters)

Canada offers to lead humanitarian force for Zaire

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME AND JAMES BONE NEW YORK

CANADA has volunteered to lead a multinational force to help to save hundreds of thousands of refugees uprooted by fighting in eastern Zaire.

Boutros Boutros Ghali, the United Nations Secretary-General, said yesterday at the World Food Summit in Rome that he had spoken to Jean Chrétien, Canada's Prime Minister, on Monday.

Dr Boutros Ghali said Canada, which he described as a "very neutral" country "has accepted to command these multinational forces".

The UN Secretary-General said the size of the force had yet to be decided but that it was likely to involve 10,000-12,000 troops. France, Spain, Italy and South Africa have offered to provide troops and America is considering providing logistical support. Diplomats said this would include transport aircraft and satellite intelligence. The cost of the operation would be borne by the participating countries.

Dr Boutros Ghali had also spoken to President Mandela about South African participation, and would have further talks with Thabo Mbeki, the Deputy President, who is attending the Rome summit. "I hope that in the next few days we will be able to have these multinational forces, and a mandate for them from the Security Council," the Secretary-General said.

Canada's offer should enable the international com-

munity to field a neutral force not dependent on France, which is viewed with suspicion by the Rwandan Government. France once supported the Hutu-led Government which conducted the 1994 genocide of the Tutsi minority in Rwanda and then fled across the border to Zaire with more than a million refugees.

Canada's offer to lead a multinational force reflects its desire to restore its credibility in Africa after while supremacists in an elite military unit, which had been sent on a peacekeeping mission to Somalia, beat a local man to death for stealing a pair of sunglasses.

Raymond Chrétien, Canada's Ambassador in Washington and the nephew of the Prime Minister, was recently appointed special UN envoy to solve the refugee crisis in Zaire and is currently touring the region.

Diplomats at UN headquar-

Fourth refugee helper is killed

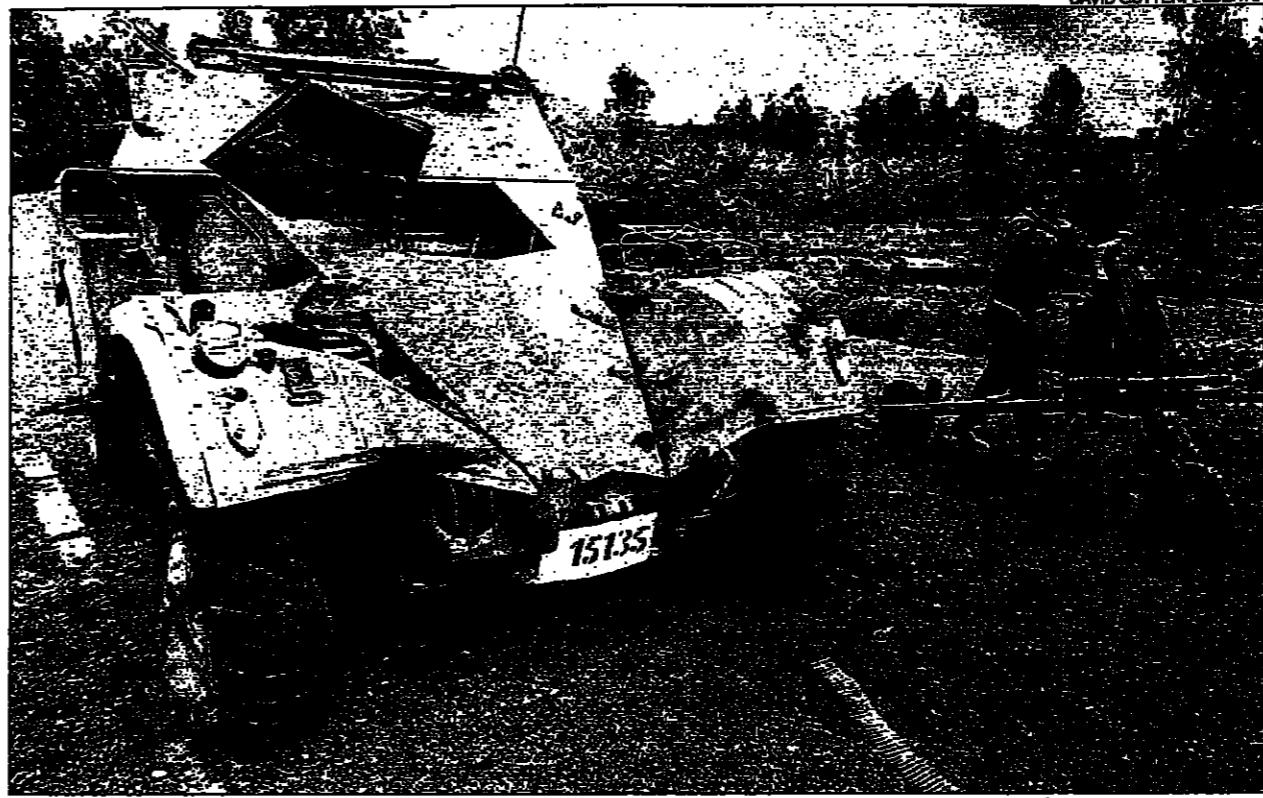
Madrid: A fourth Spanish missionary has been presumed murdered in the Bukavu area of Zaire where he was helping refugees, the Foreign Ministry said here. It urged 39 Spanish missionaries still working in the area to return to Spain. (AP)

ters said discussions were continuing about the precise role of an intervention force. Still undecided is whether the force will facilitate the delivery of aid to refugees by setting up secure "humanitarian corridors" into eastern Zaire from the Rwandan border or whether it will simply escort individual aid convoys. Debate is also continuing about the extent to which the multinational force will try to repatriate the refugees to Rwanda and Burundi.

The multinational force is

likely to be replaced in several months' time by a smaller UN unit in charge of supervising the return of the refugees to their homes. The United States has backed the principle of multinational military intervention, but was still discussing the form it should take. An American official said an announcement was expected today. Canadian officials have told other Governments that Washington is "content" for Canada to lead the multinational effort.

□ Kinshasa: Faustin Birindwa, Zaire's former Prime Minister, has arrived in Kinshasa, the capital, after fleeing into the bush when rebels seized his eastern hometown of Bukavu two weeks ago. Mr Birindwa walked more than 60 miles over rugged mountain terrain to reach a village from where he left on a small aircraft flown by his son. (Reuters)



A rider of a wooden bicycle passes the wreckage of a Zairean armoured personnel carrier in Goma yesterday.

Voodoo terror haunts fleeing Tutsis

FROM SAM KILEY
IN GOMA

CLINGING TO a pair of banana poles, Cironi Munyangabe paddled for his life across Lake Kivu. A Tutsi farmer, he did not flee Hutu militiamen, nor east Zaire's rebel advance, but the Mai Mai, naked voodoo warriors who have emerged as a frightening new ingredient for chaos in the Great Lakes cauldron.

Weary with hunger from hiding in banana plantations while the Mai Mai slaughtered Tutsis in his village, including his uncle, Mr Cironi, 45, swam 15 miles across the lake to safety in the rebel-held port of Goma.

"I didn't know much about the Mai Mai. They just came out of the forest, naked, and started shooting. They said they were going to hunt down all the Tutsis," he said, pointing at the bamboo

stalks that had saved his life on his marathon swim. Little is known about the Mai Mai, other than rumours that they practise cannibalism and believe that their magic is so strong that bullets turn to water when they hit their skin. "I didn't see them eat anyone. But I heard that they did," Mr Cironi said.

Mainly members of the Hunde tribe, they have fought for and against almost every other group: they have taken on Tutsi rebels, Rwandan Hutu extremist militia and the Zairean Army, apparently driven by little else but blood-lust.

The ordeal in the Great Lakes widened as it emerged that cholera had struck a Rwandan Hutu refugee camp in South Kivu, putting the lives of 250,000 people in Mwenga, 120 miles west of Bukavu, the regional capital, at risk.

Another 500,000 Hutu refugees, trapped by their own leaders in Mugunga camp, a 20-minute drive down Tari through the rebel area to the border with Rwanda, and an hour to Uganda.

ten miles west of Goma, are also threatened with starvation and disease as their clean water supplies have broken down and rebels have surrounded the camp.

Last night the UN High Commissioner for Refugees announced that it was ready to start an airlift of aid to Rwanda's Hutu refugees who have scattered around eastern Zaire. Ruth Marshall, for the agency, said it would soon try to fly supplies from Zaire's capital, Kinshasa, to Kisangani, 350 miles west of Goma.

The move comes after Kinshasa's insistence that aid should only be channelled through areas under its control: Kisangani is a nightmarish logistics playground. It sits on a narrow strip of land, 10 miles long, 100 yards wide, driving over appalling roads to Mugunga camp, a 20-minute drive down Tari through the rebel area to the border with Rwanda, and an hour to Uganda.

Bonn delays decision on Eurofighter

Bonn: Germany will postpone until early next year a final decision on production of the controversial Eurofighter, a move that is sure to irritate Bonn's partners in Britain, Italy and Spain. (Roger Boyes writes)

The delay became apparent during a coalition meeting yesterday on Germany's future defence needs after fierce, across-the-board spending cuts. Volker Rühe, the Defence Minister, is clearly hoping that further delay will force the German aerospace industry to cut its estimates.

Egypt charges 'Mossad spies'

Cairo: Egypt has charged an Israeli technician and an Egyptian with spying for Mossad, the Israeli secret service. Christopher Walker writes. Israeli officials are convinced, however, that the timing of the scandal is a ploy by Egyptian hardliners, angered over West Bank violence, to derail an Arab-Israeli economic conference in Cairo.

British force may stay in Bosnia

London: Britain is ready to contribute troops to an international force in Bosnia-Herzegovina after the mandate for the Nato peacekeeping force expires next month. Michael Bington writes. But Michael Bington, the Foreign Secretary, said any new force must be smaller and have a clear timetable for withdrawal.

India fishermen survive cyclone

Hyderabad: About 315 fishermen, who had been feared dead after a cyclone devastated the southeast Indian coast last week, safely reached the shore yesterday, a relief official said in Hyderabad.

However, more than 900 fishermen are still missing. (Reuters)

Liz Taylor must pay legal costs

Los Angeles: The National Enquirer crowded over a judge's ruling that Elizabeth Taylor and Larry Fortensky, her latest former husband, must pay the £263,800 costs of a failed court fight in which they had claimed an article invaded their privacy. (AP)

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Vanuatu soldiers arrested in raid after revolt over pay

FROM ROGER MAYNARD
IN SYDNEY

NEARLY half of Vanuatu's fractious paramilitary defence force was arrested yesterday in a pre-dawn operation ordered by the new leaders of the Pacific island chain.

The arrest of 138 officers and men out of a complement of 300 followed rising tension over the state's failure to pay its soldiers more than \$1 million (£600,000) in allowances. Last month the Vanuatu Mobile Force became so incensed over the matter that soldiers kidnapped President Jean Marie Leye and took him to an outer island to put their case to

Barak Sope, the acting Prime Minister. After an emergency Cabinet meeting lasting several hours, the Government agreed to pay up and the President was allowed to go home. Although the mutinous forces were granted an amnes-

ty, the Government, headed by the recently-elected Serge Vohor as Prime Minister, was clearly disturbed by their action. Yesterday Mr Vohor decided to strike back, handing law and order to the police and devising a plan to call on foreign forces to keep the peace if necessary.

Broadcasting live to Vanuatu from Australia, where he had stopped on his way to Rome, Mr Vohor said: "Law and order are now in the hands of the police."

Speaking from Vanuatu's capital, Port-Vila, Walter Lini, the Justice Minister, said the men, who had offered no resistance, would face court action.

Hungary...
...a welcome arrival

Hungary has now opened a new and dedicated National Tourist Office here in London.

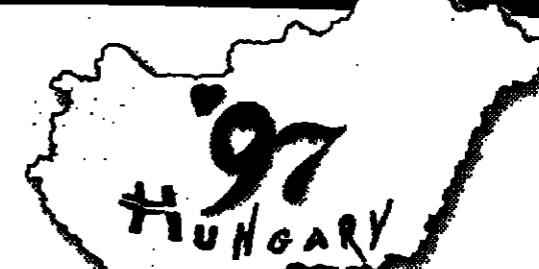
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Lawsuit rekindles doubts over death of Clinton aide

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE most compelling mystery of the Clinton Administration returned to haunt the White House yesterday when a key witness in the death of William Foster, the presidential aide and confidant sued the American Government and two FBI agents he accused of harassment and falsifying his evidence.

Patrick Knowlton, 41, a construction consultant, claimed the FBI had tampered with his testimony after he arrived at Fort Meade Park outside Washington on July 20, 1993, more than an hour before the body of the deputy White House counsel was officially discovered in nearby bushes.

The day after he was later subpoenaed to appear as a grand jury witness, Mr Knowlton said, he became subject to sustained intimidation by a surveillance network of at least 25 men, whom he claims tried to prevent him from telling his story.

Yesterday, outside the US district court in Washington, he released details of a \$1.5 million (£930,000) suit filed against the US Government and the FBI which had been sealed until after the presidential election.

"I want the truth behind why my reports were falsified by the FBI and why people were harassing me," he said. "I have no idea how Vince Foster's life ended. All I do

know is that all the information does not quite add up."

Caught in traffic while returning home from a job in Maryland, Mr Knowlton had stopped at the park to relieve himself before driving home to Washington. He parked beside a brown Honda Accord with Arkansas plates and close to the only other car in the area, a blue-grey sedan.

According to his testimony, a Middle Eastern or Hispanic-looking man in the sedan gave Mr Knowlton a threatening look as if he was guarding the park entrance.

When Mr Knowlton telephoned the park police on hearing of Foster's death the next day, they took only a brief statement and even spelled his name wrongly. Nine months later, he was interviewed by

Lawrence Monroe, an FBI agent, whom he claims went to extraordinary lengths to persuade Mr Knowlton that the Honda he had seen was not merely blue, but a later model similar to that driven by Mr Foster. Mr Monroe and Russell Bransford, another federal agent, are named in the suit, which will be handed to Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, at the end of the week.

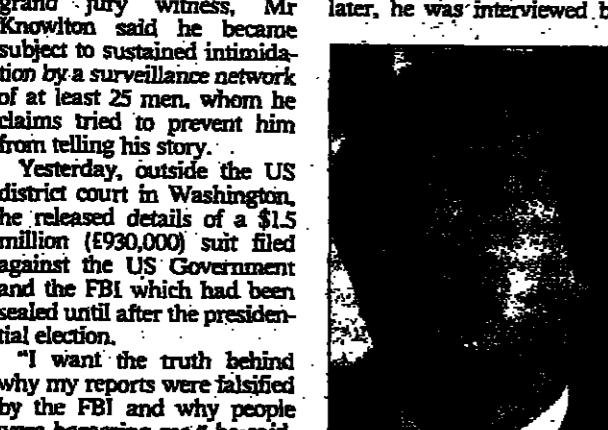
Mr Knowlton claims a series of other alterations were made to his testimony and when finally he was called before the grand jury, a form of harassment employed by covert psychological operation units was used against him.

"I feared for my life," he said. "These men followed me everywhere and gave me threatening stares wherever I walked."

The case comes under the remit of Kenneth Starr, the independent counsel on Whitewater, who said this week that his investigation had been hampered by a lack of co-operation from people with relevant information.

The death of Foster, one of the Clintons' closest friends from Arkansas, is still the most potent puzzle of this Administration. The White House consistently has said he committed suicide, but testimony from those such as Mr Knowlton has continued to leave a question mark hanging over the case.

Foster, White House says he committed suicide



The 67 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron at its Hong Kong disbandment parade in September

Loyal Gurkhas feel let down as families are left behind in Nepal

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

THE Gurkhas are extremely loyal even when they are being treated badly. They won't grumble and perhaps that is part of the problem," says Stephen Hawgood, the manager of one of the Hong Kong security companies that employs demobbed Gurkhas, now seen around town wearing red berets and guarding valuable things and important people.

However, the Gurkhas can make a point about loyalty as a two-way street. Krishna Bahadur Ale, a former captain in the Queen's Gurkhas, spent 14 years of his 24 years in the service in Hong Kong. Now a security officer, he remembers the Chinese Army firing across the border during the Cultural Revolution and seizing his commanding officer and dragging him away. "One of the lads took out his kukri [the Gurkha dagger], went in, and brought him back."

Now Mr Krishna faces being sent back to Nepal, with 800 other Gurkha veterans, because of Hong Kong's tightening laws on imported labour. "Hong Kong is my second home. Maybe we are owed something by Hong Kong. Maybe not," he says. He may as well have said Britain.

There have been Gurkhas in the British Army for almost 180 years and they have been posted to Hong Kong for 48 of them. As the garrison here winds down, in which at one time there were 7,500 Gurkhas, most soldiers and their families, are leaving the Army. Many have been flown home but a few hundred will join The Parachute Regiment in Britain; 750 more will bolster the Royal Signals, Transport and Engineers.

Here lies the core of the family problem. Under the 1947 tripartite agreement between Britain, India and Ne-

pal, Gurkhas in the British Army can be accompanied by their families overseas only to Hong Kong or Brunei, unlike all other British soldiers who, except on short tours such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, take their families with them.

Gurkhas based in Britain knew that when they were sent to Hong Kong or Brunei their families would join them. Now only those posted to The Parachute Regiment have this hope; those posted to Brunei will be in the Royal Gurkha Rifles, a combat outfit.

For those in the Gurkha Signals, Transport or Engineers there can never again be an "accompanied" posting because Hong Kong is no longer available. Thus their families will remain in Nepal, one of the world's poorest countries. Its wretched schools mean their children will no longer have some of their education in service schools nor will

their families be looked after by British Army doctors.

By contrast, there are tens of thousands of Gurkhas in the Indian Army who, when their enlistments are finished, can settle in India with their families.

A Hong Kong source close to the Army said yesterday: "It's garbage about the tripartite agreement. It could be changed. But the Ministry of Defence is terrified of British racists who don't want a lot of black women giving birth in England to black babies who will then be British automatically. It's as simple as that."

This dispute seems a long way from November 8, 1944, when the last 153 Gurkhas trained in Hong Kong's Malaya Lines took part in the colony's final passing out parade.

Simon Jenkins, page 18
Leading article, page 19

Arms cache found under New York

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

A MAZE of tunnels and underground "dungeons" containing rifles, machine-guns and explosives was found in a residential district of New York.

Police said the bizarre find in Brooklyn's Crown Heights area could either be the work

of an urban militia which may have been using the bomb factory. The four-storey brownstone houses have been occupied for 15 years by an offshoot of the 1960s radical group, the Weathermen, which was founded with the aim of conducting a "people's war" against the American Government.

Thirty arrests were made after several people darted out of the building and numerous packages were taken away for forensic examination.

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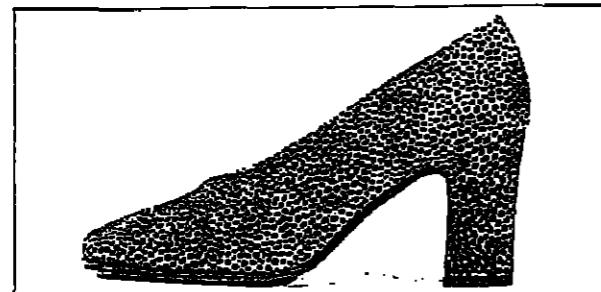
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Leopard print court shoes, £119. Armando Pollini



Style Editor Grace Bradberry says this season's fashions won't work without high heels unless you want to look like a frump

Tripping round town in a pair of ultra-high stilettos is the sort of thing that models get up to. We expect it of them. And we'd never dream of doing anything so silly ourselves.

But this winter many of us could find ourselves trying to emulate the high-heeled acrobatics of Shalom Harlow and her ilk. It's either that or look like frumps.

The season's simple, minimalist styles just won't work without heels. On-the-knee skirts, boot-cut trousers, slip-dresses, bias-cut evening wear — they all need that bit of extra lift.

Exactly which shape of heel is not the issue. Wooden stacks have a cult fashion following, as do Mary Janes. Stilettos remain popular. But it's really the height that counts — and we're talking very high indeed.

If you think you can pass on this particular trend, then think again. Vertiginous footwear really will transform many of the best looks, a fact brought home to me in Joseph recently, when the assistant slipped a pair of Prada shoes into the changing room.

It was a shrewd sales tactic. With the addition of heels, a pair of tweed trousers that had looked frumpy and unflattering suddenly had an elongating effect on the legs. A skirt that had looked ordinary and oddly proportioned came into its own as a quirky, stretchy little number.

The only problem was that I just couldn't walk in the shoes. Even standing stock-still in the changing room they were a challenge. So I didn't buy them (the £210 price tag was another turn-off), but I did buy the clothes, and that meant finding a pair of comfortable stacks elsewhere.

Now I don't wish to heap the blame on Russell & Bromley (where I eventually bought a pair of brown mock-croc stacks). Their enormous wooden heels are doubtless as wearable as those of any other high street store. But that's not saying much. For the first month, at any rate, they were agony.

Staggering down the street, a blister rapidly forming on one heel, I found it hard to believe that a less practical pair of shoes had ever

existed. Eventually, I learnt to clump the whole foot down at once and things improved. Even now, however, fleet-footed agility is out.

But according to Angela Dunn, a catwalk model for the past ten years, my shoes are for wimps. "Stilettos are far worse than stack heels," she says. "But to be honest, 99 per cent of the time, the shoes I'm given to wear are uncomfortable."

Her tip for walking in thick high heels is to put the whole of the foot down at once: "In stacks, you can't put your heel down first because the arch of your foot can't bend as you take a step forward. It sounds silly, but you really do have to practise."

Even so, accidents will happen. "If you're on the catwalk and you're running or losing your balance, then you clinch the knee muscles and the back muscles," says Angela. "But obviously that's not something you'd want to try too often..."

Manolo Blahnik, the high society shoe designer, has another suggestion: buy shoes that are properly constructed. "I saw a very important American editor recently, and she was wearing huge constructivist heels. She was in pain," he

says. "It doesn't matter how high the shoe is, the important thing is that the balance of the body has to be in the central point. There's no secret about it — it simply has to be beautifully done by the best technicians." A clutch of whom, of course, in his employ.

Even so, he has steered clear of the clumpiest stacks. "I do have a stack heel, but it's thinner, not a reproduction of the Seventies. Really, stack heels are for the children."

Armando Pollini, the Italian designer, is also adamant that technical wizardry can create high but comfortable shoes "by a meticulous attention to shape and the use of technically advanced materials". But if the bank balance won't run to designer shoes, then you may want to heed George Bernard Shaw's advice: "If you rebel against high-heeled shoes, take care to do so in a very smart hat." Animal print cloches are just the thing this season...

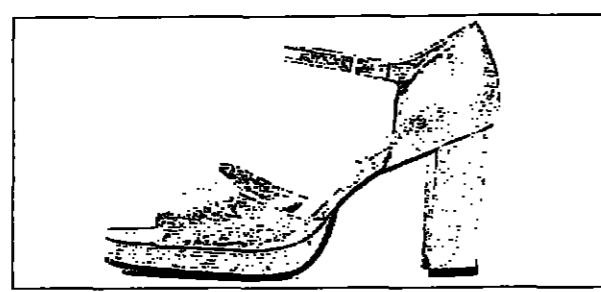
Photographs by DES JENSON



Shalom Harlow tripping down the street in the season's high heels, accompanied by Matt Le Blanc



Taupe suede lace-up bootie shoes, £290, Manolo Blahnik



Gold open-toe platform shoes, £49.99, Office



Shaded leather tan heel, £49.99, Ravel



Plum mock-croc high heel, £125, Russell & Bromley

The only problem was I just could not walk in the shoes'

Photographs by DES JENSON

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Small clothes, big looks

Child-woman, mutton-dressed-as-lamb, jail bait — there are any number of distasteful expressions for females who do not dress their age. While gender-bending has become an acceptable fashion statement for women, its chronological equivalent remains taboo.

And quite right, too, you might think. Many of us feel distinctly queasy when we hear that the schoolgirl look is big — as it is again this year — or when we see pictures of 12-year-old girls dressed up to look 21. Paula Yates's appearance in an undersized Little Miss Trouble T-shirt did nothing to make the concept more palatable.

Of course, there are exceptions. Camilla Nickerson, fashion editor of American Vogue, looks minimalist and chic in her expert school uniform buys. And legions of elegant thirtysomething women have tasteless basics bearing the legend "age 12".

One of the season's best fashion tips is to nip along to the school uniform departments, where boys' grey V-neck sweaters can look strikingly like the ones in this winter's Prada collection — the V is higher and shallower than on the conventional Benetton version.

Children's departments offer clothes by leading designers at a fraction of the adult price

not get away with charging 13-year-olds the same prices they would charge women.

And the sizes are not as small as you'd think. A size 14 sweater from Gapkids, for example, will easily fit a size 12 woman. The only thing to watch out for is the arm length — although given that skimp-skiny looks are the height of chic, a little too much wrist can be a good thing. Failing that, opt for sleeveless jackets and tank tops. It is also worth investigating boys' ranges —

Ralph Lauren and Paul Smith are particularly good for jumpers. Other labels to look for include Jigsaw, which has just launched a unisex children's range, and Naf Naf. Benetton 012 is one of the best-kept fashion secrets.

● **BEST BUYS:** Armani quilted A-line skirt, £94.95

GapKids fake-fur swing coat, £58, national inquiry number: 0800 427 789.

GapKids metallic pink or blue puffa, £52.

GapKids black or red Norwegian-style jumper, £22.

GapKids simple polo-necks from £14 and T-shirts from £9.

DKNY waisted jeans-style jacket in red, orange or blue, £115.95.

Pepe Jeans navy polo-neck with orange trim, £14.95.

Striped polo-neck, £69.95 by Moschino Junior.

Black and yellow striped leggings, £54.95 by DKNY both available from Harrods Junior Collections.

Pepe Jeans black satin puffa with canary-yellow lining, £74.95.

GapKids fake-fur swing coat, £58, national inquiry number: 0800 427 789.

GapKids metallic pink or blue puffa, £52.

GapKids black or red Norwegian-style jumper, £22.

GapKids simple polo-necks from £14 and T-shirts from £9.

MEDIA

Passion and Channel 5: Maggie Brown meets the man who has devised Britain's new daily soap opera

— Media, pages 22 and 23

MUST HAVE



Not only is brown the new black, but the cardigan is the new jacket. Pick up on the Seventies sitcom look with this £250 Joseph Tricot sweater with built-in fingerless gloves. Available from Joseph, 77 Fulham Road, London SW3 (0171-823 9500). Mustn't have Seventies-style patchwork

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Astrology and the need to believe

Why are we going to New Age cranks for old-style cures?

Being right is not necessarily a consolation. A Church of England report out this week quite accurately describes the cult of the clairvoyant and star signs as "the new religion", and it's the fact that it's correct which is so damning.

But that is simply how it is now, you could argue, one irrational body of beliefs takes over from another. Consider this just a spiritual evolution — or fashion if you wish.

Still, the Church is justifiably peeved: 12 per cent of the population go to Church, but several times that number read their horoscopes. Since the same poll that found the percentage of churchgoers also revealed that more than two thirds of those questioned think of themselves as essentially religious (and believing in God), it becomes obvious that the spiritual slack is being taken up elsewhere.

It is manifestly true, however regrettably, that humans seem to have a basic need for a certain amount of mumbo-jumbo, and if we don't find that need met in one place then we will look for it elsewhere.

What must really gall the clergy is the whine (reproduced in this report in the form of a fictional green-ink letter) that "the Church is years out of date" when what has taken over from it is a body of ancient superstitions, all runes and ley lines, that would make a conven of medieval witches look like a rigorously academic meeting of scientific minds.

The Bishop of Rochester, the Right Rev Dr Michael Nazir-Ali, who has chaired the group which has written *The Search for Faith & Witness for the Church*, correctly identifies a fundamental change in the way we live. If people no longer go to Church (despite professing a belief in God), then the apparent contradiction inherent in this fact must be analysed.

The obvious implication, before we even start investigating further, may simply be that all normal people know that when people are questioned they don't tell the truth. More specifically, it is strange how many people, who are to all intents and purposes unbelievers, are suddenly nervous about the idea of answering "no" to the question "Do you believe in God?"

A mixture of egomania (even if we doubt God's existence we need to feel he doesn't doubt ours) and superstition makes the interviewee feel spooked at the prospect of the God he doesn't really believe in striking him with a thunderbolt. So bets are hedged: no to church but yes to God.

The bishop prefers to blame the "privatisation" of society, by which he means the way we increasingly live our lives at home, alone. He's right: we no longer meet to draw water from a well. Virtually the only communal activity that exists now is talking about television programmes we have watched.

But although I see where the bishop is leading us (and think him

right on the main point), it doesn't all add up. It may be part of the modern malaise to sit at home engrossed in the newspaper horoscope rather than trudging off in the cold and the dark to Church, but a need for community is every bit as fundamental to humans (more, even) than a need for spiritual belief. Indeed, the two come together in the need for ritual, for ceremony, and are thus most efficiently met by church or synagogue or mosque.

None of this explains why we now prefer to go to New Age cranks for old-style cures rather than pursuing the more traditional, orthodox route to spiritual satisfaction or medical treatment; for that matter. As the Church realises the clergy and the clairvoyants are, in some extent, in the same business.

Is an irrational belief in star signs any better or worse than an irrational belief in God? Churchmen don't deny that they require an irrational belief, indeed, that is the essence of faith. Faith is necessarily set against reason... against science. As indeed are all those who believe in horoscopes. And like the bishop, I condemn astrology, but because it is an offence against science, not because it is an offence against God.

This may be the technological age, but it is marked by a popular anti-scientific movement, which proudly, pointedly, prefers the darkness to the light. Anyone who believes in star signs (or iridology or homeopathy or whatever) believes that to have their particular belief denounced as unscientific is to its and their credit.

That's how stupid it all is: if it cannot be proved it must, in the higher scheme of things, be right, is the form of unreasoning followed. But even if one ignores for the moment the fact that there is not one iota of scientific proof for astrology, one should remind the new believers that the horoscope was invented before anyone knew about Pluto or Uranus. Even within its own terms it is thus a flawed system of belief. And since the obstetrician or midwife exerts 60,000 times more gravitational force on the baby being born than the nearest planet, I truly can't see how anyone who wants to be taken halfway seriously could even begin to give astrology the time of day.

But they do, they do. And that's what bothers me. It always used to be that just the stupid people believed in it all. But now perfectly respectable people do, if people who could be called perfectly respectable. During both my pregnancies I was astonished to find it common to be asked — or more often told — about the baby's star sign. Quite frankly, I do not expect my friends to know about such things, or not in detail, let alone express an interest.

I never dare be quite as withering as I feel when I enter lower myself into a conversation about star signs, although I don't know why I should be so constrained by the desire not to offend when I feel pretty offended and intellectually embarrassed by being drawn into such an idiotic exchange.

Out of politeness, I confess I did once allow my astrological chart to be drawn, when a friend of a friend offered and I was too spineless to refuse. I can't remember a thing except that I am apparently born under the same planetary conjunctions as George Orwell. Unfortunately, it doesn't seem to mean I am equipped with his genius, but that's astrology for you.

He believes last week's vote was a rejection of the Mansfield Road site, not of him. And it was hardly representative. "Only 15 per cent of the Congregation attended, and only eight per cent voted against. How can eight per cent defeat such an important project? We must know the verdict of the other 85 per cent."

A business school in Oxford was

not his idea in the first place. In 1990 Oxford decided it wanted a world class business school in the centre of Oxford life. They needed funds of £40 million and appealed

to me. I agreed to give 50 per cent. People think I insisted on the site. That is not the case. The university presented it as suitable.

"We selected an imaginative architect [Dixon-Jones] and as the Vice-Chancellor said, we are giving a garden back to Oxford."

Mr Said, who has several homes,

including one in Marbella, can live

where he pleases, but he says: "I

have chosen England." He married his English wife Rosemary, a Cheltenham Ladies' College girl, 27 years ago. He has an Oxfordshire estate of 30,000 acres. Henry Cecil trains his horses. "The horse embodies what is strong and beautiful in Arab culture. I always love racing — even more since I started winning classics. And I admire the democratic institutions of this country — including the freedom of

the press, ha ha ha."

His father was Syria's education minister who founded Damascus University in the Twenties during the French mandate. Wafic Said went to a Jesuit school in Beirut. After Cambridge, he dabbled in banking and in 1967 opened two restaurants in Kensington High Street, decorated like an Arab tent, with Lebanese dancers. "I was

terribly fashionable, but most of the customers were friends who did not pay their bills."

Oxford's objections are perfectly clear to him. "Some are against the site because 30 years ago the University pledged not to build on it. Some are against having a management school at Oxford at all. And finally there are those who are against me because they do not like me."

"I say to them, if it is any comfort to them, I am not an arms dealer. I have never sold so much as a pen knife. I am Syrian born. I am proud of it, and I am an admirer of Mrs Thatcher. And if this presents a

problem, I am very sorry." Yes, he was the agent responsible for fixing Britain's biggest defence order, the £20 billion Al-Yamamah contract with Saudi Arabia.

"I was involved in my small way in defending the interests of Britain. The project brought tremendous benefit to the nation for the last seven years."

"Something like 400,000 people have worked on this for almost five years and many people have committed themselves to it. It is worth fighting for."

He knows that suspicion centres

on the fact that his foundation will own the business school: "We will oversee the construction of the building. It is nonsense that we will have a say in the academic running of the school."

"It will be run by ten trustees, six of them appointed by me, but approved by the Vice-Chancellor — including myself, Sir Charles Powell and Lord Alexander — and four by the university. The only other power the foundation has is the appointment of the director, Professor John Kay, one of the greatest economists in the country."

Of the dons I have spoken to, some will vote for the school "in order not to deter other benefactors" while others will vote against, not out of malice to Mr Said, or snobbery about business courses, but because they think the university has been underhand. "Oxford is a very rebellious society," he said.

"We don't want your bloody money," read a banner outside the Sheldonian last week. Mr Said shrugs: "What would undergraduates be coming to if they did not protest?"

If there is agreement by February 1, his benefaction stands. If next January's ballot of 3,200 dons goes against him, Mr Said will "bow and accept the decision. I would have no choice. Who am I to tell Oxford what to do? But it would be regrettable, heartbreaking, a terrible blow. And everyone would lose."

But he will not withdraw. "We

All cash-strapped colleges wheedle funds out of tycoons'

— Valerie Grove

Illustration: Martin Beddall

Photograph: Martin Beddall

Inset photograph: Martin Beddall

Alan Coren



■ Worry about asteroids? Not me — I'm too busy planning my fossilisation

Deep upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be fossilised in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.

Indeed, Sir, it does a pretty good job even when he knows there's only an outside chance, because he doesn't know how outside that chance might be. He could start getting fossilised any minute. That is why Dr Duncan Steel, the Director of Project Space Guard, is so eager to establish, as soon as possible, a global network of monitoring stations to watch for giant asteroids heading earthwards. He wants us to be prepared for the end of the world as we know it. He said so on Tuesday's *Today* programme, since when I have been unable to concentrate my mind on anything else.

Because while there is nothing any of us can do about the end of the world as we know it, except say goodbye to it, there is something all of us can do about the beginning of the world as we don't know it, and that is say hello to it. For what, according to Dr Steel, this giant asteroid will do after it has collided with Earth is what its ancestor did to the dinosaurs: its impact having generated enough dust to blot out the sun, the consequent end of nourishing photosynthesis will mean that, when man has finished his last tin of pilchards and pot of noodles, he, along with all other living beings, will have his clogs popped from under him, following which an ice Age will rapidly roll in to fossilise him to the spot.

Thereafter, nothing will happen for aeons. But eventually — perhaps from under the inert dust, perhaps from under the defrosted sea — something will crawl. It might even hop. Either way, it will not of course be much of anything, but given the passage of several further aeons, it will gradually develop arms, legs, grunts, fire, wheels, and, in inevitable course, a Museum of Natural History to which it can drag its children on rainy afternoons.

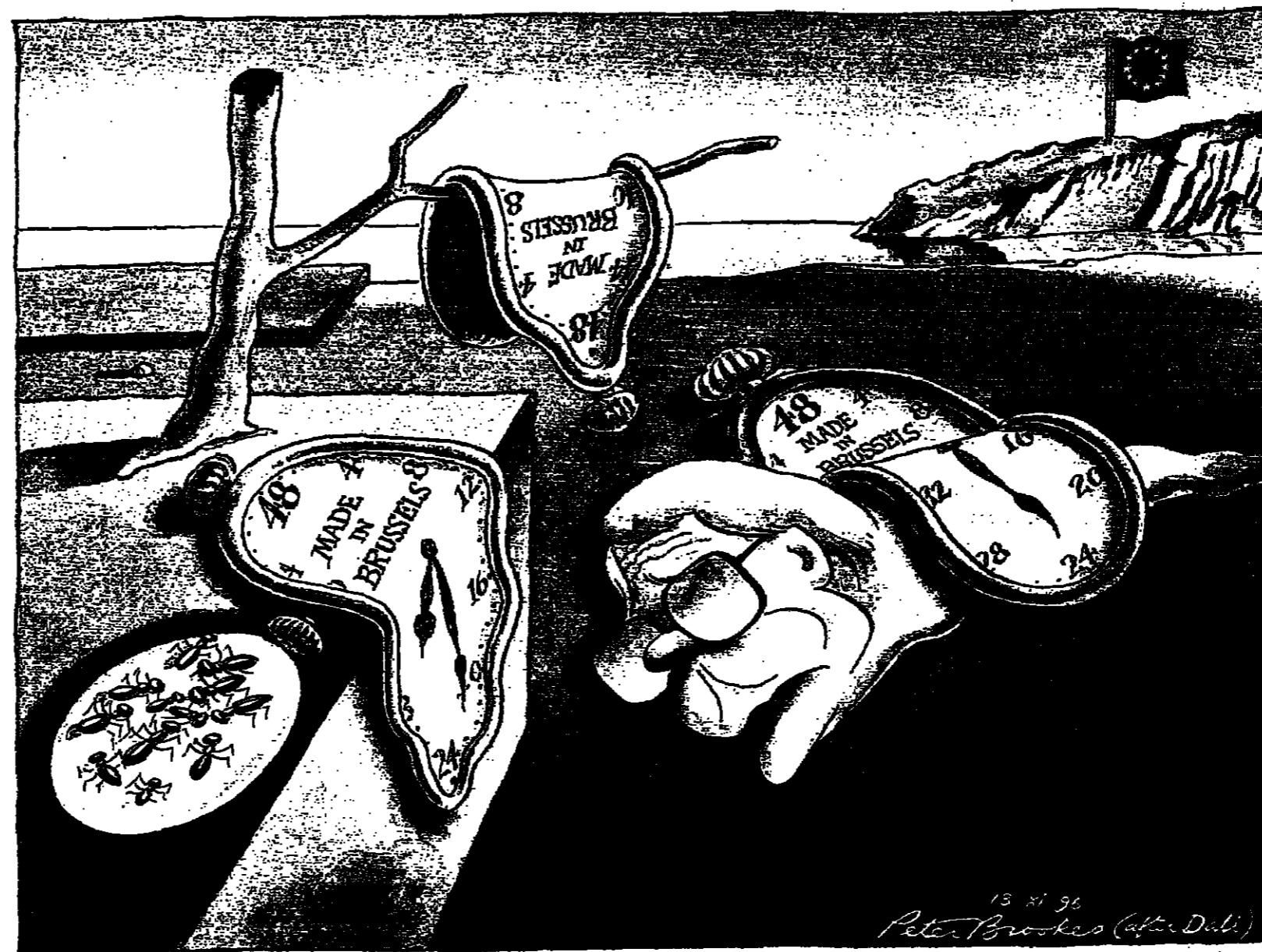
This is where we, you and I, come in. Again. This is where we say the hello I mentioned several million years ago, as it were. We do not of course speak this hello, since we are nothing but stony bones, or if you prefer, bony stones, but our painstakingly excavated presence — on plinths, in showcases, or, if we are really lucky, wired together and hanging from the ceiling — will enable our incalculably remote successors to get the message, and reconstruct our lives.

Clearly, therefore, we have to sort out our renaissance now, before it is too late (true, I went into the garden last night and looked up and saw nothing upward — or, more to the point, toward — but an astronomer friend tells me that some of these asteroids can go like the clappers, a fortnight is a long time in galaxies), which is why I wanted to alert you to your duty today. And duty it is, as we wish to present our distant posterity with not merely an appealing picture of ourselves and our civilisation, but with one from which it may take example.

I must of course leave you to make your own decisions as to how you choose personally to dispose yourselves for immortality, but if I may presume to nudge you in what I feel to be the right direction, let me say that, for myself as Jack Frost begins to nibble terminally at my toes, I shall make certain that I am not holding a pistol, a combat knife, a personal organiser, an ashtray, a mobile phone, a novelty air-freshener, or the hand of an estate agent, but, rather, a fine quality omelette-pan, a cricket bat (yes, the wood will rot, but a telling indentation should remain), a small bust of Shakespeare, a ukulele, a non-digital half-hunter, stuff like that. As to my preferred demeanour, since I rather doubt that a horse could be persuaded to stand still long enough for me to be fossilised on it, I may instead, though it is admittedly less glamorous, arrange to be fossilised in a bath, which would at least show what hygienic folk the Ancient Britons were.

After all — which of course is when they come — the most important thing with fossils is to leave a good impression.

The Alan Coren Omnibus is published today by Robson Books at £12.99.



The opium of profit

As a visit to Hong Kong confirms,
Britain has been right to introduce
democracy to the colony — albeit belatedly

small matter. Sometimes money talks; sometimes money is right to know.

This cuts no ice with Mr Patten. He points out with some exasperation that Hong Kong's dealings with China have done nothing but prosper since the supposed advent of confrontation in 1992. Its output has risen by a quarter, exports by two-thirds and investment by 40 per cent. He might even point out that if China "needs Hong Kong more than Hong Kong needs China" — a phrase beloved of commercial analysts — then confrontation is of no account. A cynic might even say that Britain could have sent out a chimpanzee as Governor and it would not have demanded profit or made China more or less well-disposed to Britain.

The implication of this argument is that Britain should in 1992 have sent out a "scoundrel Governor" to take the colony and run. London would have continued the Foreign

Office policy of disregarding democratic pressure within the colony. Come next July, a handful of loyalist Chinese officials and businessmen would have grabbed their passports and vanished, leaving Hong Kong's citizens with no institutions through which to express their views, whether to Britain or to China. I imagine there would have been riots in the streets. This was an untenable policy in 1992 and would be more so now. No thesis is more absurd than that past colonial rule from London is no different in principle from future Chinese rule from Peking. True, London has been tardy in giving democracy to Hong Kong — even today the Legislative Council has no control over the executive. But at least London believes in democracy, China does not.

Mr Patten has achieved two goals in wandering through this mausoleum of empires. He has honoured a commitment freely negotiated with China in 1994, to put in place in the colony an elected assembly that might have life

after 1997. Britain has made a good habit of leaving its colonies in passably democratic order. Since last year the old Supreme Court building in central Hong Kong has witnessed an activity unknown on the Chinese mainland: a freely elected body laying into its governors with abandon. Dominated by the fiercely articulate Martin Lee and Emily Lau, this assembly has damned Mr Patten for not going even further down the route to democracy. It was not Mr Patten's fault that this journey was not begun sooner.

What he has done is demonstrate, however briefly, an object lesson in how capitalism must work *table d'hôte*, to those who believe it can be ordered *a la carte*. Hong Kong has succeeded not just by being a low-tax free port with a vast hinterland where labour is cheap. It has succeeded because dynamic entrepreneurs prefer a regime that respects civil rights, tolerates a free press, polices markets and promotes on merit.

Hong Kong has changed a great deal from the colonial satrapy that I visited ten years ago. It is almost a mature political entity. The colony's greatest challenge has been corruption. But there is no comparison between its experience of this plague and the massive corruption that passes for "opening up the economy" in China.

The significance of the Patten legacy will be impossible to judge for some years. Whether or not British firms will lose future contracts is hard to predict. All we know is that British rule has enabled them to become very rich in the past. Hong Kong is now swarming with collaborationists eager to assure Peking and its friends that they are foursquare against Mr Patten. The executive Peking is likely to choose for the colony, the

tycoon C.H. Tung, is already in receipt of enough kowtows to keep the contracts rolling into the millennium. We need not cry for Hong Kong on this score.

I expect that the city will see a year or two of boom as China's new breed of state businessmen push their noses to the trough. But not only a fantasist could ignore reality. This city-state is to become part of China. Though nobody in Hong Kong cares to mention it now, China is one of the world's political dinosaurs. It is a centralised Communist dictatorship in which dissidents are imprisoned or shot and minorities are suppressed. Neighbouring states are still conquered and most new wealth goes to the corrupt party "princelings" of Peking.

Sooner or later, push will come to shove in Hong Kong. China's Mr Tung had to be bailed out by the Bank of China, where he faced bankruptcy, a habit that will doubtless catch on. The Communists will not put up with true open-market competition in Hong Kong, or with press freedom, or with an independent judiciary. And what of the colony's own party cadres, which are to have a millionaire foisted on them as boss? When comes their pay-day?

The real danger to British interests in China comes well down the line. It will come when the Chinese have made a complete hash of Hong Kong and the past decade will be declared by one and all to have been a golden age. Then Peking will be angry. The British legacy will be described as a fuse left burning to ignite every act of dissent against China.

That fuse should be a source of pride. Britain is leaving not just a gilded cash-register on the Chinese coast, but a minor monument to Western political values. Europe may be poor at microchips and motorbikes, but it is good at the art of government with the consent of the people. Nobody is ramming democracy down Hong Kong's throat. Every survey indicates that its citizens want more or less self-rule. Next July, Peking will face a straight choice: to continue Mr Patten's path to democracy or to install autocracy. It plainly intends autocracy.

That is China's sovereign right. But for Britain not to have left that choice open would have been the true betrayal of Hong Kong. More than that, I believe it would have betrayed whatever honour lay in Britain's whole imperial enterprise. Europe has little to be proud of in the Far East. But at the moment it does at least wait for Hong Kong.

Why our opt-out did not work

Iain Duncan Smith says we must dam the flood at source

Yesterday the European Court of Justice finally dismissed the British Government's challenge over the working time directive on the 48-hour working week. What is clear from this decision is that the Commission, the Council of Ministers and the European Court of Justice believe Britain's social chapter opt-out is inconsistent with the process of political union in Europe. Thus the principle is established. Not only will the Court chip away at our derogations, but it has opened the door to a flood of regulations which the Commission has in waiting, such as increased holiday rights for fathers, more regulations on sex discrimination, regulations on part-time workers, workers' privacy and others. What successive governments wrongly thought of as general provisions on social policy in the Treaty of Rome are clearly much more powerful, and are being used against us.

It is a key decision also because it is the first such article to originate in the social chapter, the predecessor of the social chapter. It was not then advanced under provisions for "health and safety in the workplace", but in the "living and working conditions" section. But all the Commission needed to do was change the heading, which is a clear demonstration of how the institutions of the EU use the treaty for their own political ends.

In 1991, the Prime Minister was absolutely right to reject the provisions of the social chapter. The opt-out was an attempt to protect Britain's competitive position. However, yesterday's decision demonstrates that there were two serious problems with this position from the outset. The first is that although we opted out of the social chapter, we remained bound by a set of 80 existing articles on social policy in the treaty. These are worded in such a way as to give the European Court of Justice massive scope to enforce such regulations as the working time directive. Worse than that, the key articles in this section are covered by qualified majority voting, which means that once a regulation is proposed in this section, Britain has no veto. Ironically this was bolstered by the European Court of Justice, which made it clear in a judgment that the Commission was within its rights to use the treaty for the benefit of the EU.

Sooner or later, push will come to shove in Hong Kong. China's Mr Tung had to be bailed out by the Bank of China, where he faced bankruptcy, a habit that will doubtless catch on. The Communists will not put up with true open-market competition in Hong Kong, or with press freedom, or with an independent judiciary. And what of the colony's own party cadres, which are to have a millionaire foisted on them as boss? When comes their pay-day?

The second problem is that even though we opted out of the social chapter, the other member states continue to use the institutions of the EU to run the social chapter. This made it inevitable that they would eventually work to bypass our opt-out, using the main part of the treaty.

This of course highlights a serious flaw in the Labour Party's thinking. Gordon Brown and Tony Blair, knowing how unpopular the social chapter is, have been saying that they will sign up to it but will continue to use the veto. The reality is quite different. Once they have signed up to the chapter, our partners will force most of the other directives through on qualified majority voting, using existing treaty articles, which Tony Blair will not be able to stop. Either the Labour Party knows this and is deliberately trying to deceive the British public, or it is demonstrating a degree of stupidity which shows its unfitness for government.

The British economy is in a strong condition, but is under threat from this decision. With low levels of inflation, strong growth and falling unemployment, our economy is becoming the envy of other members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. This success, on which the Prime Minister was right to place such emphasis this week, is made possible by the flexibility of our workforce and by the lack of unnecessary regulations in our marketplace, which means that non-wage costs here are half those of in other EU countries.

The Prime Minister has said that he will fight this decision at the inter-governmental conference — a move we can all support. He will do so on the principle that member governments should be responsible to their own electorates for the levels of social provision and cost. As global competition increases, Britain will be right to insist that we remain competitive not just in Europe but everywhere else.

However, the logic of this argument must lead us to insist that the sort of drive towards a Europe-wide social policy that is envisaged in the treaty and enshrined in the eight articles is wrong. We should seek to extend the principle of opt-out to cover the articles already in the treaty, for it is they which empower the European Commission and Court of Justice. It is an opportunity to safeguard our own position and subsequently to lead the EU out of the trap of falling competitiveness. Any deal at the inter-governmental conference which does not more or less negate this decision will be only temporary, for the Commission and the Court will continue their drive to bypass our opt-out.

The issue at the general election will be how to continue the British economic success, which has brought falling unemployment and growing prosperity. This European decision is therefore directly related, and will be a core component in showing the Conservative record. At Maastricht we dammed part of the river; we must now insist on damming the rest.

The author is the Conservative MP for Chingford.

Feet first

NEW DEPTHS of vulgarity have been plumbed by the Duchess of York, who is promoting herself in self-pitying style on television chat-shows in New York. Not only has she been criticising "the system, the firm, the grey men, the institution" of the Royal Family for her fall from grace; she now blames Diana, Princess of Wales, for giving her verrucas.

She spotted the scourge of prep-school matrons on her soles when she was single and hobnobbing with her friend, the newly wed Princess of Wales. "When I lived

in Clapham, Diana helped me by giving me all her shoes (and, less happily, her verrucas)," she writes in *My Story*, her autobiography.

Yesterday, her office refused to elaborate or to comment on suggestions that she might have given her lover John Bryan foot-and-mouth disease. Medical experts discount Diana as a source of infection, however. "Verrucas have a very long incubation period — up to 18 months," says Thomas Stuttaford, the *Times* doctor. "She can't say she got them from Diana. She's far more likely to have caught them from lounging about by a French swimming pool."

• An early prize for tastelessness in Christmas books goes to *Last Dinner on the Titanic*, destined for the cookery sections. With recipes and menus from the ship's five-star restaurant, "this lavishly illustrated gift book includes suggestions for music, serving and decorations". Let's hope it sinks without trace.

Job specs

AGE MUST be catching up with Michael Heseltine, the wild-eyed



DIARY

pointed Minister for Sport later that year. Moynihan had been cox of the successful Oxford Boat in 1977, which was coached to victory by Topolski.

Ladies?

THE 2,500 feminists gathering for an international conference on violence and women's citizenship will return home having struck a memorable blow for female emancipation.

Campaigns for free abortion on demand and for lesbian adoption rights have yet to come to fruition.

one still lustful after the top job. He arrived late to deliver the main speech at the Association of County Councils' conference this week. With hair flapping, he patted his pockets in dismay: "One small problem. I haven't got my reading glasses. Has anyone got pair?" Up popped a local council executive with a very un-Heseltinian pair of specs. They were round and steel-framed and, when perched upon the deputy prime minister's nose, transformed him into an elderly but stately version of the troublesome pop star Liam Gallagher.

• Dan Topolski, the Oxford rowing coach, was adviser on the film *True Blue*. But while Topolski is played by a Belgian actor, Johan Leyen, Dan himself appears as the umpire of the Boat Race. In fact, the 1987 umpire was Colin Moynihan, who was ap-

"But darling, we might be hit by an asteroid soon"

But the Doc-Marten-clodding sisters will not forget their coup: the storming of the gentlemen's conveniences at the Brighton Conference Centre, where they banished all half-dozen of the male delegates and commandeered the facilities by putting a sign on the door. "These are women's toilets. Men elsewhere."

The boys wisely looked for an alternative.

• In the pouring rain outside the Commons the other night, Alan Rusbridger, the Editor of The Guardian, hailed a cab hoping to be taken to television studios for an interview. Simon Hughes, the extraordinary cab-owning Liberal Democrat MP, wound down his window — bringing to mind Mohamed Al Fayed's memorable suggestion that MPs could be rented in the same way as hiring a taxi.

ish by Turkish Cypriot newspapers, with the exception of *Kibris*, the biggest-selling daily — which is owned by Nadir. Apparently Nadir wrote £900,000-worth of cheques to a friend; who hoped to use them as collateral for a loan. They bounced, and the dapper chap once known as the Sultan of Berkeley Square, on account of his lavish outlook, is now counting loose change.

Nadir's name has been circulated in a government blacklist. The news has been reported with rel-



New nadir for Asil

P.H.S.



EUROPE ISN'T WORKING

Social legislation should be made in Britain, not Brussels

The European Court of Justice's ruling that Britain must implement the working time directive is objectionable in principle and will prove damaging in practice. In a Europe of nation states centralised authority should not be intervening in this way to dictate arrangements between employers and workers. Lost independence aside, this directive will cost industry jobs and the taxpayer money. The Government is determined to exercise its veto over institutional reform in Europe until a treaty is agreed which will guarantee Britain's exemption from the directive. There is a political advantage for the Tories in fighting on this ground, but they would not need to fight this battle if they had been better stewards of Britain's sovereignty in the past.

Advocates of limiting working hours have argued that it enhances the quality of life and increases employment by protecting workers from exploitation and encouraging industries to recruit new employees to take up the slack. In practice, it has the opposite effect. Companies that cannot roster workers to meet demand see their customers go elsewhere. A competitive advantage is lost, and in due course, so are jobs. Far from granting any social benefit, such legislation is likely to increase the number who need to claim state benefits and reduce the capacity of the economy to pay for them.

The knowledge that labour market regulation makes it more difficult for labour to find a market drove the Conservatives' supply-side reforms in the Eighties. But even as Britain was adopting the flexibility that has seen it secure the lowest level of unemployment of any major European economy, its partners were moving in the opposite direction. In 1989, inspired by the bicentenary of the French Revolution, Francois Mitterrand sought to confer new "social" rights on Europe's citizens to complement the economic freedoms secured by the single market. The engine for the propagation of these rights was the social chapter of the Maastricht treaty. Recognising that the

chapter could undo a decade of reform, John Major secured his "opt-out".

This, however, has proved a legislative Maginot Line. The European Commission has classified regulations on working hours as "health and safety" matters rather than social. Health and safety legislation is covered by Article 118 of the Single European Act and is subject to qualified majority voting. Britain is thus powerless in law to resist the measure. The Advocate-General to the European Court has argued, in a manner that would have fit well in the world of Lewis Carroll, that "health...is social and does not consist of just being free of sickness". The Court, which exists to advance integration, has been only too happy to see the exemption nullified.

Mr Major believes he has been traduced. He has pledged not to agree to any treaty revision until he secures a guarantee that his opt-out is as effective as he hoped. There is, however, an element of astigmatism in Mr Major's stance. No-one expects any treaty revision to be agreed until after the election. Diplomatic work can continue behind the scenes while the Prime Minister has no need to agree to anything in public. Mr Major can appear the defender of British independence and paint Labour as Brussels's handmaiden all in a way that does not divide his party.

While the Prime Minister may attempt to display righteous indignation, he cannot claim he was not offered advanced warning. During the passage of the Bill to ratify the Maastricht treaty Mr Major was told that the social chapter opt-out was not an effective protection against social legislation. As Iain Duncan Smith points out on the opposite page, Britain is still bound by eight articles in the treaty which govern social policy. The Government is right to fight now, but the only assurance that ministers will not need to fight, fight and fight again in the future is a renegotiation of the treaty which does not simply provide new opt-outs to be outflanked but throws the federalist ratchet into reverse.

HOMES FIT FOR HEROES

The Gurkha families should be accommodated in Britain

On Monday the nation's thoughts turned to those who died for their country in various conflicts throughout this century. Not least among those who made the ultimate sacrifice are the Gurkhas who have served the British Army since 1815 and won the Victoria Cross on 26 occasions.

Yesterday, Mr Sher Bahadur Deuba, the Prime Minister of Nepal, met with John Major to petition the Prime Minister on Gurkha concerns. There are now some 4,000 Gurkhas present in our Armed Forces. Until this month they were predominantly stationed in Hong Kong with pockets in Britain and Brunei. With the closure of their Hong Kong base, some 2,000 troops will be transferred to this country to join the 5th Airborne Brigade. Their grievances are two-fold: the level of pensions paid to former servicemen and the refusal of the Ministry of Defence to offer housing to the families of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Gurkha Rifles.

The Nepalese Prime Minister urged Mr Major to look at pension provision for the Gurkhas. They currently receive barely 15 per cent of the rate enjoyed by British soldiers. That produces a sum ranging from £22 to £79 per month. That might seem a paltry amount but looks more credible when set against an average annual income in Nepal of £200. Furthermore, the Gurkhas provide men not only for Britain but the armies of India and Nepal as well. In the longer term, the main military future of the Gurkhas lies in Asia, not Aldershot. Those arms could not possibly expect to sustain respectable levels if much more attractive financial arrangements were made available by this country. Although there are important questions concerning those who,

for several reasons, fail to qualify for pensions, on the core matter the Ministry of Defence has a solid argument.

On the issue of military housing, however, Whitehall stands on much more dubious ground. While stationed in Hong Kong the Gurkha regiment did enjoy provision for married accommodation. As the custom in Nepal is for young men to marry usually before the age of 21, such provision was vital to sustaining a sizeable force. In addition, a school devoted to the promotion of Nepali culture existed. No such facility can be provided by the Church Crookham barracks. This means Gurkha families must return to Nepal from Hong Kong and has caused great resentment.

The ministry notes, accurately, that Gurkhas stationed in Britain have never been provided with such housing before. This is true but the proportion of all soldiers serving in this country has never been as high as it will be now that their task in Hong Kong has ended.

What might have been reasonable to tolerate when a tour of duty to Britain formed a relatively small proportion of a Gurkha's life is not so easily defended in these new circumstances. Britain's position appears churlish.

Michael Portillo, to his credit, has not ruled out a reconsideration. The new quarters being constructed for the Gurkhas at the John Moore Barracks in Folkestone could be adapted to include substantial married accommodation if the money and the political will can be found. It should be—not only because of the debt of honour we owe for distinguished service in the past but as an act of foresight if the MoD's recruitment problems persist.

CAVIARE CRISIS

Why sturgeons were sticklers for communism

Caviare was always the supreme irony of Soviet Russia. When the shop counters were bare, the queues unending and even the simplest provisions rationed, caviare, the delicacy that was a byword in the capitalist world for conspicuous consumption and a champagne lifestyle, was freely available. It was piled high in the better restaurants; it was the standard snack served in the Bolshoi's crushbar; and, despite the cost, caviare, both red and black, was always the boast of every hostess, the pride of birthday celebration. The Anglo-American school in Moscow still remembers the African boy, asked to identify a picture of a tin of baked beans, exclaiming with delight "it's caviare". In Brezhnev's Russia, caviare was familiar; beans were unknown.

But as Russia turns capitalist, the caviare is disappearing. The Caspian Sea sturgeon that provided the elixir of the tsars are being rapidly hunted to extinction. Overfishing, the collapse of state controls, the plundering demands of smugglers and mafia bosses have all but ruined what was once an enormously profitable industry. Whereas 20 years ago Russia harvested some 2,000 tonnes of black caviare a year, last year's catch amounted to no more than 100 tonnes. Up to 90 per cent of the caviare now taken from the seas is smuggled. As the official price soars because of the shortage, the black market price of caviare has plummeted.

Fishing is one of the few industries where the case for regulation is overwhelming. However inefficient the economy of the former Soviet Union, the communists at least understood that the national treasure of their seas had to be nurtured and protected. Hatcheries then were properly organised, breeding seasons undisturbed, fishing quotas enforced and cross-border co-operation encouraged with Iran, the world's only other great caviare producer. All that has now been swept away. Pirate fishing boats are catching the magnificent female sturgeon before they are mature enough to produce the eggs; trawlers, previously banned, are decimating stocks; clandestine exporters are sending out caviare that is neither freshly stored nor properly packed. Only Iran is still able to enforce some sort of worthwhile controls at the southern end of the sea.

Western importers reckon that commercial sturgeon stocks will vanish within three years; conservationists estimate another five to ten years. As for the caviare now reaching the West, too often the eggs are stale or infected with chemicals washed into the polluted Caspian. Scandinavian lumpfish roes has already cornered the market in cocktail canapés; soon caviare, pricing itself beyond even the reach of the most ostentatious hostess, will be no more than a memory of a delicacy savoured and lost.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5046

'Failure' of care in the community

From Dr T. R. Moss

Sir, The news that the Government is to announce a "shake-up" of mental health care ("Radical policies to end the failure of care in the community", report, November 7), and the working party set up by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists to be convened for addressing this issue.

Mental distress is very common and will have touched every family; but severe illness is uncommon, and violence from people who are mentally ill is very rare, although its consequences are of course tragic. The vast majority of people with severe mental illness live settled lives in the community without incident and are offered good care when required.

This association believes that the spectrum of care will help the relatively few people who need long-term 24-hour care—and will in part replace the old long-stay hospitals which are rightly being closed. However, restructuring the organisation and management arrangements for mental health care will be no more than a diversion, creating different boundaries which will still have to be crossed for full care to be offered.

We would like to see a consultation document that will allow for informed discussion on how to improve effective care from all professionals, how to manage the sharing of information when the laws governing it are complex, and how to get more resources into community support, which is where they are most needed by the majority of users of mental health services.

Yours sincerely,
JENNIFER BERNARD,
Chair, ADSS Mental Health
Strategy Group,
Social Services Department,
Civic Centre,
Bartras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne.
November 7.

From Mr Peter Thurnham,
MP for Bolton North East
(Liberal Democrat)

Sir, Jill Sherman (report, November 6) correctly identifies the damaging division of responsibilities between health authorities and local councils as being the real problem with community care.

Labour and the Government may claim to be committed to action but only the Liberal Democrats have long called for a full merger between the two bodies—along with fundamental reform of local government—as the preferred solution to tackle the growing crisis.

The Government's White Paper is long overdue and further health funds are clearly a priority, not only for hospitals next year but in order to avert further disasters in community care this year.

Yours faithfully,
PETER THURNHAM
(Liberal Democrat spokesperson on
community care),
House of Commons.
November 7.

From Mrs Elaine Isaacs

Sir, "Care in the community" has failed many mentally ill people. I have tried for nearly ten years to find out who was responsible for my late husband's care, which covered several hospitals in different health districts, general practitioners, the NHS and the private sector.

Tragically, many people with mental health problems are more likely to harm themselves, not other people. Your report highlights the need for better co-ordination of services, more resources, and more care and support for mentally ill people and their carers. We also need to be aware of the public's misconceptions about mental illness and tackle the stigma and discrimination experienced both by people who are mentally ill and their families.

Most people who are mentally ill are voluntary patients, not detained under the Mental Health Act. There is very little redress for them or their families when something goes wrong, as tragically happened to my husband almost ten years ago.

Yours faithfully,
ELAINE ISAACS,
7 Dovehouse Close,
Whitfield, Manchester.
November 11.

Burgess bottle

From Mr Christopher Lewis

Sir, Regarding your report (November 5) about the important Batavian bottle discovered at the Skegness Antiques Roadshow, I would like to make it clear that both our experts, David Battie and Paul Atterbury, were aware that the bottle was decorated by William Burgess — his name was written round the bottom, after all. Both recognised it as an important "lost" piece and both agreed upon a value of £25,000-£30,000.

Your report may have given the impression that Mr Battie recognised the piece as just an ornament worth £200 — its value without the Burgess decoration. This is incorrect.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER LEWIS
(Executive Producer,
Antiques Roadshow),
British Broadcasting Corporation,
Whitechapel Road, Bristol.

Business letters, page 29

Reducing the misery of infertility

From Dr T. R. Moss

genital chlamydial agents. Combined with testing for the organism, it has allowed effective control of chlamydial disease in our local population.

This is evidenced indirectly by the work of our surgeons. In most UK units it would be expected that considerably more young women than young men would have their appendix removed for acute abdominal pain. Where effective chlamydia control is achieved this ratio is reduced, as chlamydia can very closely mimic the features of appendicitis by irritate the outer membrane; in this unit the ratio is now one-to-one.

Not only will a national screening programme dramatically reduce the misery, suffering and cost of avoidable infertility, it may also save very considerable operative expenditure for "appendicitis".

Yours faithfully,
T. R. MOSS
Clinical Director,
Genito-Urinary Medicine,
The Doncaster Royal & Montagu Hospital NHS Trust,
Arthington Road,
Doncaster, Yorkshire.
November 7.

Moral values in school and society

From Mr Trevor Waller

able to witness there was a supreme example of the success of British education.

My last attendance was around ten years ago, and there is no doubt that standards have risen during that time. From my own knowledge of schools I know that behind what I saw and heard there are thousands of other youngsters, all achieving well under the direction of excellent and inspirational teachers; but where are the newspaper headlines, the reports and the television clips, proclaiming the excellence of the education system and extolling the competence of the teaching profession?

Media hype and parliamentary rhetoric seem only to want to concentrate on the negative, without allowing us to see what is positive. There are many, many more positive and good things to say about British education than we are hearing at the moment.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN R. ANDREWS,
General Secretary,
Professional Association of Teachers,
2 St James' Court, Friar Gate, Derby.
November 7.

From the Reverend Nicholas Charrington

Sir, It's interesting that Lord Rees-Mogg (article, October 23) and Viscount Sidmouth (letter, October 31), in their criticism of the Roman Catholic bishops' report *The Common Good*, suggest that the fate of the unborn child is a matter for moral concern but the economics of a free market is not (see also letters, October 26).

I'm sure the bishops would agree that we should "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's". But can Caesar be trusted with the free market if God is to be kept out of it?

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS CHARRINGTON,
The Rectory,
Longdon, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.
November 7.

A woman's role

From Ms Kate Hatfield

they wished to keep themselves and their children fed they were forced to accept whatever their husbands might choose to impose on them.

Yours etc.,
KATE HATFIELD,
c/o Worldwide Publishers Ltd,
61-63 Uxbridge Road, W5.
November 6.

From Mr Alan Challoner

Sir, My one disagreement with Roger Scruton is his suggestion that it is "the centuries-old distinction of the masculine and the feminine, upon which the habit of marital fidelity depends". Marital fidelity surely depends not upon differences—but upon compatibilities. Those who are good friends and companions first, and who have trust and empathy with each other, are the ones whose eventual marriages are likely to last. Marriages based on what Scruton refers to as "sexual licence and the quick fix" are often built on sand.

As he suggests, "the family is built on sacrifice. It requires two people to provide for their children... [and have] fidelity, self-discipline, economy and faith in the future."

Yours faithfully,
ALAN CHALLONER,
13 The Village,
Bodelwyddan, Denbighshire.
November 6.

Updated 'Fowler'

From Dr J. A. D. Ewart

Sir, Would Fowler have criticised the child, upstairs in bed, who asked his mother, "What did you bring that book I didn't want to be read to out of up for?"

Yours sincerely,
JOHN GRANT,
Penide, 17 Stone Road, Bromley, Kent.
November 6.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Value of nation's pause for thought

From Miss Sierra Hutton-Wilson

Sir, A collective silence, whether observed at The Cenotaph or at a football stadium, leaves those who participate in no doubt as to its profound and lasting effect (reports, November 11 and 12).

While we are familiar with the moving ceremonies on Remembrance Sunday, it seems there are some who have yet to be fully convinced of the value of an additional two minutes' silence on the actual anniversary of the Armistice. It seems extraordinary to me that among that number were not only the disaffected youth I saw in television who thought it "all a waste of time", but also major stories such as John Lewis and Sainsbury. What is hard to understand is the generally low-key, low-priority coverage given in some sections of the media.

The British Legion deserves better support for its inspired and inspiring initiative. The whole point of observing the exact hour and day of the Armistice is to pause in the midst of normal activity and witness the nation coming to a standstill as one in honour those whose sacrifice made that freedom possible. In that instant lies the key to an inner reminder of our finer qualities: a potentially transformative experience of respect, gratitude, community, pride, hope and of resolve towards peace. Such sentiments need every encouragement in modern life.

Next year there should be no half measures. The British Legion, the Government, media, commerce and industry should give a wholehearted commitment to full participation and acknowledgement of our history and future resolve. For those who remain sceptical, I would simply say — try it. Yours faithfully,

SIERRA HUTTON-WILSON,
Priory Cottage,
Church View, Evercreech, Somerset.
November 12.

Millennium dome

From Lord Birkenhead

Sir, Lady Panufnik's admirable letter (November 8) should remind the Millennium Commission that what it should celebrate is not the end of the last thousand years but the start of the next.

It would be salutary if no project were approved that did not stand a good chance of surviving at least the 21st century. It would be even more salutary if every project were to convey some lasting benefit on the inhabitants of these islands.

Yours faithfully,
BIRKENHEAD,
House of Lords.
November 8.

From the Chief Executive of the Millennium Exhibition

OBITUARIES

Tim Gidal, Israeli photographer, died in Jerusalem on October 6. He was born in Munich on May 18, 1909.

Tim Gidal's work as a photographer reached its apogee in the massive visual history *The Jews in Germany from Roman Times to the Weimar Republic* which was published in Munich in 1938. It summed up a creative life which had begun in his native Munich, continued in Britain after 1933, and took him to Israel where he finally settled and was naturalised. En route, he spent periods in Switzerland and in the United States, of which he was also a citizen.

Besides his documentary records, he was also a pioneer of modern photojournalism — though he preferred to use the term photoreporting, implying the primacy of the visual image over words as the conveyor of the message. He had begun his life as a photographer on magazines in Munich and Berlin in the last days of the Weimar Republic. Fleeing from Hitler to Britain, he worked for a while for Stefan Lorant's *Picture Post*, and later captured the action of the Second World War as a photographer with the British 8th and 14th Armies in North Africa and Burma.

Nahum Ignaz Gidalewitsch was the child of Russian Jewish parents who had settled in Munich. From 1928 he studied the history of art, economics and international law at Munich and Berlin universities. During this time he had also begun to contribute photo stories to *Münchner Illustrierte, Berliner Illustrirte* and *Die Woche*.

The photographs which were subsequently to form the basis for the exhibition *Memories of Jewish Poland*, 1932, were taken during this period. They depict the Jewish community of Oświęcim (Auschwitz), a theme all the more haunting from the subsequent

history of the place. In these pictures, portraits of the Orthodox Jews on the misty twilight walk to the synagogue alternate with the long shadows cast by the lines of Zionist pioneers.

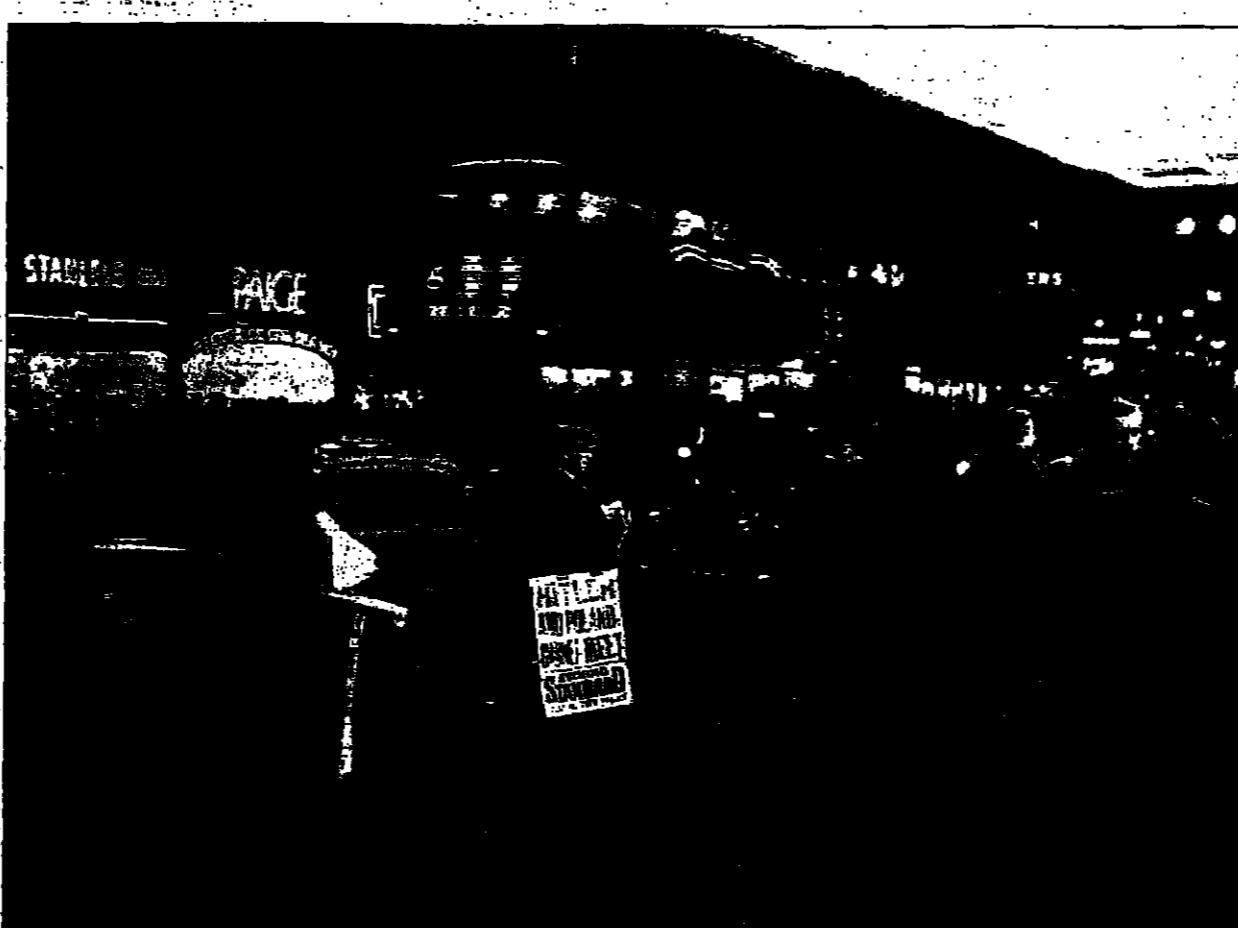
This was to be one of his last photographic essays in pre-war Middle Europe. When Hitler came to power, Gidal left Germany but continued his studies at Basle University where he took his doctorate with a thesis on *Bildberichterstattung und Presse (Picture Reporting and the Press)*, a novel subject in universities in those far-off days before "media studies" became a vogue.

In 1936 Gidal went to Palestine and for the next two years worked there, travelling for British and American magazines. In 1938 he came to London where, until 1940, he worked for *Picture Post*. His photographic work for the magazine was of immense variety. He went to India and recorded village life and the impact of Mahatma Gandhi on the nation's consciousness. Gidal's half-naked before a microphones admiring a rapt audience is one of his most striking images.

But he also, and with equal penetration, affectionately recorded the British at home on the streets of London and in provincial cities. He had a particular feeling for the texture of London life. His image of the bustle of evening on a West End pavement, while newspaper billboards silently warn of impending war, is replete with the sense of an age and a society about to be swept violently away.

From 1942 he served on the staff of the British Army magazine *Parade* where, as chief staff reporter, he held the rank of captain. As such he travelled over the whole Middle Eastern theatre of war with the 8th Army, and subsequently with Slim's 14th Army in Burma.

In these disparate theatres, with their completely different conditions, he recorded an



London, 1939: Gidal captures the atmosphere of a West End street as war clouds gather

astonishing variety of scenes, from both sides. He is able, with admirable impartiality, to imbue the interior of a German bunker, adorned with a crudely drawn bathing belle under which is wistfully scrawled the legend "Wenn der Untaub kommt" ("If we ever get leave"), with a poignancy equal to any of the war scenes he recorded.

In a different vein, *Burma 1944* — weary troops tramping through dust raised by the passage of armoured fighting vehicles and artillery — is replete with the sense of an age and a society about to be swept violently away.

After the war Gidal returned to Jerusalem, where for

three years he worked as a freelance photographer. But America beckoned and claimed him for a while. In 1950 he went to New York as a consultant for *Life* magazine and stayed on there to lecture in visual communications at the New School for Social Research, from 1955 to 1958.

For another fifteen years he roamed the world as a freelance photographer and writer, publishing a score of books with his first wife Sonia. These took as their theme villages he had seen and recorded all over the world. Their sales — well over half a million altogether — gave him financial independence.

But in 1971, he decided to

return permanently to Israel, taking a job as a lecturer in visual communications at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. From this point onwards he was able to stage numerous exhibitions of his work which brought together the different strands of his experience. *Tim Gidal: in the 1930s, an Israeli Museum*, exhibition, was seen in London, New York, Berlin and Jerusalem. *Memories of Jewish Poland*, 1932 travelled from the Museum of the Diaspora, Tel Aviv, to Jerusalem and Haifa and toured to the US, Germany, Switzerland, Poland and Austria. Museums in all these countries hold collections of his

work, as does the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Although he had dwelt among scenes of horror — as a Jew in Europe with the threat of Nazism impending; as a young Zionist in Palestine during the struggles of the 1950s; and as a war reporter — Gidal never lent his camera lens merely to recording sensational images. Alike amid war or in the most innocuous scenes of domesticity, he captures a sense of humanity asserting itself over harsh or even simply frustrating circumstances.

Tim Gidal is survived by his wife, Pia, and by a son from his first marriage, which ended in divorce.

PROFESSOR HANS KOSTERLITZ

Hans Kosterlitz, FRS, former Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Aberdeen, died on October 26 aged 93. He was born in Berlin on April 27, 1903.

Kosterlitz was later proved right.

Over the following years he came to believe more and more that morphine was not an inhibitory drug but was an agonist (ie, an active substance) acting on its own receptor in the body. If this were true then *ipso facto* the body must produce a substance which was the physiological agonist for that receptor. The opportunity to prove this came in 1973.

Kosterlitz had remained in the department of physiology at Aberdeen from his arrival in 1934 until 1968, progressing from assistant and Carnegie teaching fellow to lecturer, senior lecturer and finally reader. As well as teaching physiology he also became responsible for the teaching of pharmacology, and in 1968, when a chair in that subject was created, Kosterlitz, at 65, became its first holder. Three years later, pharmacology became a separate department with him as its head. (The department was to last only 20 years, with just one further head, before being incorporated into a department of biomedical sciences, much to Kosterlitz's displeasure.)

In 1973, when he reached 70, Kosterlitz finally had to retire. It was then, with research money from both sides of the Atlantic, that he set up the Unit for Addictive Drugs (where he was Director until the time of his death), to look for the endogenous morphine agonist. Within a short time his research was successful, and in 1975 he reported the discovery of the enkephalins, one of the landmarks of pharmacology.

It was this interest in diabetes that brought Kosterlitz to Aberdeen. Professor MacLeod who, with Banting and Best, had discovered insulin in his laboratory in Toronto, had returned to Aberdeen as head of physiology, and Kosterlitz was keen to work with him. In fact, MacLeod died the following year, but Kosterlitz stayed on to continue his research into the galactose metabolism and liver disease in diabetic patients.

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BERNARD LAFFERTY

Bernard Lafferty, butler to the American heiress Doris Duke, died in Los Angeles on November 4 aged 51. He was born on April 14, 1945.

BERNARD LAFFERTY was the titillating Irish butler who nursed the immensely wealthy Doris Duke through her last illness in 1993. Their friendship provided a fittingly bizarre postscript to the eccentric life of the much-married tobacco heiress.

An expert in the art of pleasing older women, Lafferty had arrived in the Duke household in 1983, and quickly taken the place of Chandri Heffner (her adopted daughter) as Doris Duke's confidante. He was attentive to his mistress's every whim. He spent hours every morning on her hair and make-up. He served her breakfast melon at exactly room temperature. For her part, Duke encouraged him to grow his reddish-brown hair into a pony tail

and to sport a gypsy hoop in his ear. From the moment he arrived, Lafferty did his best to ensure that no one but himself could come near her.

But the main mystery centred not on how they had become so close but rather on why Duke, on her deathbed, should suddenly have revoked her old will and made a new one which named her servant co-executor of her vast estate — at a salary of \$500,000 a year. She also left him a lump sum of \$5 million.

Lafferty had developed expensive habits while living with Duke but he had little time to indulge these in the last three years of his life. Immediately she died, Duke's will was challenged by former employees. Lafferty was painted as a man who had cajoled a heavily sedated woman into giving him control of the estate — and perhaps even hastened her end. He became a familiar sight in the courtroom while lawyers argued over abstruse points of law (an exercise which he likened to Chinese water torture). Compared to a figure from a Gothic horror film, he felt that his job title was poisoning public opinion. "The butler word they like," he said, "because it's always the butler who did it."

But no evidence of foul play was discovered. In April this year, after millions of dollars had been squandered on lawyers' fees, Lafferty relinquished his role as co-executor in exchange for a lump sum of \$4.5 million and a yearly income of \$500,000.

Tales of Lafferty's profligacy, drinking bouts and reliance on an alarming array of drugs had given ammunition to his foes. His version of his childhood and early life, too, seemed suspiciously sparse.

Born near Creeslough in Co Donegal, he was orphaned when his parents died in separate road accidents.

Barely literate, he arrived in America in 1972 to live with an aunt. For ten years he worked in Philadelphia's Bellevue Stratford Hotel, and became friends with Elizabeth Taylor through his attentiveness towards her pets. Peggy Lee lured him away to become her butler, and passed him on to more Hollywood friends. After being dismissed by Chandri Heffner's brother-in-law for his heavy drinking, Lafferty secured the post of butler with Duke in 1987.

Until that point the Duke household had been run on lines of old-fashioned formality. But now, as the old woman became increasingly frail, she began to rely on her paid retainers as though they were family. Despite the singularity of her relationship with Lafferty, at least one Duke biographer regarded him as a genuine friend.

But the indecent haste with which he began spending his new fortune after her death did nothing to quieten the rumours. Lafferty installed a gilt throne in Duke's old room, and cruised the gay bars of Los Angeles wearing snake-skin boots behind the wheel of a new Cadillac. The gypsy gold hoop earring was discarded for a diamond stud. However much journalists muttered about the goings-on, his Hollywood friends — indulgent of celebrity and wealth — remained loyal, and he was often to be seen about town, escorting ageing stars. His death, the cause of which was not immediately apparent, was thought to have been hastened by his fondness for the bottle. He remained unmarried.

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Is a new batch of Chris Evanses coming on stream?

Radio Prankster takes to the air

For grown-ups only: that is how the nanny state has long treated broadcasting. Student stations in America have long held a place on the dial in university towns. But not until February will Britain get its first full-time, student-operated commercial station, Oxygen FM, with programmes made and presented by Oxford students, has just won an eight-year licence from the Radio Authority, thanks apparently to a strong business plan.

This recognition of the youthful appetite, not only for radio but for the business of radio, has been too long coming. While, according to *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, there are 22 university stations around Britain, they mainly go out at low power on medium wave, often for just a month or two a year.

But FM is where they want to be because that broadcasting frequency is better for music. Two other hopefuls are Kick FM at Nottingham Trent University and Shout FM at John Moores University, Liverpool. Both hope, like Oxygen, to win a permanent licence eventually, against other contenders for licences in their area.

One obvious reason for a reluctance to hand students the mike is that you never know what they might say. Indeed, as one of Shout FM's organisers says, he wants the station to be a cutting-edge, innovative station like BBC's Radio 1.

How many Chris Evanses can Britain take? Even one may be too many, to judge from the swelling chorus of Middle England outrage against the patter the irrepressible Evans rings into the ears of the young every weekday morning on Radio 1. His latest effrontery — inviting those female listeners to lose their virginity to ring him up and report on their progress — seems calculated to offend driving-to-school mums and the *Daily Mail*.

But Middle England need not worry. Evans is a genius — not that he can do no wrong. It is beyond me why this natural entertainer, blessed with such irresistible bimetallic effervescence, has to insult his bosses and his subordinates, boast about his money or even over-worry to the point where he cannot control his tongue. I still think he belongs with the all-time greats who have evolved in the curious non-commercial environment of British broadcasting.

It was Channel 4, with its own eccentric structure, which put this red-haired, perpetually-motion creature before our eyes in *The Big Breakfast*. And even this laissez-faire channel has found that it can no longer risk Evans live. It pre-records his Friday teatime



BRENDA MADDOX

television show, giving time to bleep out the F words before they hit the air.

But rest assured: on commercial radio Evans could never get away with what he does on BBC radio. Only in the self-regulating BBC does he have the latitude to go over the top. The Radio Authority's code of behaviour is far stricter and more specific: "smut, titillation, crudity and sexual stereotyping must be avoided". And the authority has sanctions to hand: fines or loss of licence.

The puritanism of commercial radio is not the fault of the Radio Authority, which is charged by Parliament with keeping a tight rein on commercial radio. Indeed, only in the past few years, with Government-approved expansion of the FM waveband, has the authority been allowed to give out licences in novel forms undreamt of when commercial radio was launched in 1973 under strict regulations which virtually apologised for it being "not the BBC".

Recently, the authority has been giving licences to smaller and smaller patches of turf.

So is the British radio universe finally balanced, all in all? The licence-fee-supported BBC has more freedom to tolerate uninhibited speech. Commercial radio is freer to allow private investors to experiment with odd shapes and sizes of audiences. Perhaps. But the BBC's permissiveness would

be the more admirable were it not totally dependent on Evans to hold Radio 1's position as the most-listened-to radio station in the country. The off-rebuked Evans knows, like the head chorister caught smoking, that the powers that be need him and that, to the congregation, he looks like a fundamentally nice boy who is all the more likable for being sometimes naughty.

THINGS to look out for:

- Whether the Chancellor's Budget speech on November 26 includes mention of a future sale of Channel 4;

- Whether the Department of Trade and Industry's draft rules of access to digital subscription television, to be issued later this month, assuage outsiders' anxieties about non-discriminatory access to BSkyB's set-top box;

- Whether the BBC can keep its promise to "use plain language". Last week I failed to spot this vow on page 35 of the BBC's 53-page list of commitments. I am happy to report the good news but worried that the promise applies only to BBC prose addressed to the public. In its international communications, it seems, Birt-speak will survive.

It's one for the judge and two for . . .

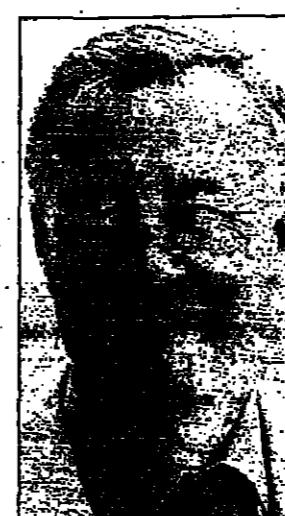
it has attended has been a definite thumbs-up.

SEAN O'BRIEN, the News of the World reporter who fearlessly confronted Liam Gallagher, the Oasis singer, at the weekend and got a fist in the face for his trouble, should be thankful for small mercies.

O'Brien managed to keep quiet his own far more embarrassing secret. He recently won first prize on Man O' Man, the programme so tacky that LWT has just axed it. In the show, hosted by the evergreen Chris Tarrant, young men strut in boxer shorts and undergo a series of insane tests to determine who is the ideal bloke. A roomful of baying women cast their votes and flock round the winner.

O'Brien, then a freelance reporter working for the Sunday Mirror, so impressed the screaming lovelies that he won a £15,000 Harley Davidson and a lot of stick in the newsroom. However, he chose not to share this with the ape-like Gallagher whom he confronted with a photograph which showed the singer with a woman who was not his fiancée, Patry Kansit.

"If Liam had known that he would have probably kicked his head in," a sensitive Oasis camp insider said.



Conran publicity stunt

Finny, ha ha

WHAT do Sir Terence Conran, Ford hatchback and a tank full of ROI have in common? Answer: a rather bizarre publicity stunt to promote Ford's new baby, the Ka.

Visitors to Mezzo, Conran's trendy restaurant in Soho, this week will be greeted by the spectacle of a full-size Ka, converted into an aquarium; one of the dinky new cars is also on show in the Conran Shop at Brompton Cross. The innovative stunt was dreamt up by Clayton Heeley, the specialist

agency. But there is another link much closer to the Conran home. The mastermind of the merchandising is none other than Sir Terence's son, Sebastian.

NOT everything is shrinking at Express newspapers. While staff and budgets have been reduced to accommodate the new leaner-looking seven-day operation, some things are expanding — namely the office of Stephen Grabiner, the executive director.

Staff have been forced to

endure a cacophony of bangs

and drilling noises as workmen install mahogany sur-

roundings into the huge,

triple-aspect, fourth-floor

room. Grabiner, credited as

being the architect of the

drastic changes at Lodgate

House, now holds court looking

out over the Thames and St Paul's Cathedral. "His

office appears to be growing in direct proportion to the

staff shrinking," said an in-

sider at the Express bunker.

time high of 50 million hits to its website AllPolitics.

Throughout election day, the computer army brigade tapped into exit polls for the Senate, House and gubernatorial contests, state by state totals and the full texts of candidates' speeches. As if that wasn't enough, they were at it again the next day accessing behind-the-scenes election

photographs of President Clinton and Bob Dole. "Our ability to provide such rich content to so many users makes this a history-making moment for CNN," a spokesman said.



Clinton dull election

Every cliché in the ad agency's book

BBC2 screened a most entertaining fly-on-the-wall documentary about advertising last night as part of the *When Rover Met BMW* series.

Throughout the half-hour special, which focused on the changed advertising needs of Rover cars in the light of the BMW takeover, just about every advertising cliché was wheeled out.

There was the bow-tied, over-precious creative, embodied in Robin Wright, chief of BMW's agency WCRS. Clad in lime green corduroy, he delighted in the moniker "brand architect" rather than mere admiral. Then there was the fancy car. Mr Wright pulled up at Rover's headquarters in his chauffeur-driven, top-of-the-range BMW, complete with his 3545 PR personalised numberplate. The clichés continued with the lavish second home in the country, this one a Northamptonshire farm belonging to another featured advertising executive.

But best of all was the ludicrous

expensive advertising shoot, costing £750,000, which brought downtown Manhattan to a grinding halt for a day and involved the meticulous selection of one out of 120 actors to wear one out of 40 shirts, 60 ties and four Paul Smith suits. And all that for just 30 seconds.

PROOF that celebrity advertising does not always work, if proof were needed, comes in the shape of the disastrous campaign for the Cable Communications Association, starring Dawn French. She was depicted, rather bizarrely, holding onto an enlarged piece of tubing, which was supposed to represent a cable, while sitting on top of a cow and sporting too much lipstick.

A hefty £10 million was spent on national TV to air the commercial but now the CCA has parted with its

director of marketing, dumped the agency responsible for the work and ended the campaign altogether amid dark mutterings from senior operators that the ad was "only average".

AGENCY folk will be gathering for a spot of festive fun at London's Comedy Store on December 9 to watch or star in the industry's popular spoof game show *Whose ad is it anyway?*

Modelled on the Channel 4 Hat Trick Productions programme *Whose line is it anyway?*, the contest similarly obliges participants to indulge in humiliating activities.

Rounds will include the one on writing two-minute slogans using an improbable collection of words, thereby creating the ad most likely to be banned by the TV advertising watchdog, the Broadcast Advertising Clearance Committee.

BELINDA ARCHER



Celebrity ad star Dawn French

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S.W. ENGLAND/BERKS/OXON
SOLID SALARY + COMMISSION
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Atlas Copco Compressors Ltd is part of a world leader in the manufacture, sales and marketing of compressors and associated equipment. Due to expansion, we are now keen to recruit an experienced and enthusiastic Sales Engineer to promote and expand the sales of our stationary industrial compressors direct to our customers.

The successful candidate will possess excellent sales and communication skills as well as a degree or equivalent in engineering. This will be complemented with a solid engineering background and a proven track record in capital equipment sales, ideally from within the compressed air industry.

To apply, please write enclosing a CV and current salary details quoting Ref 79/96 to Penelope Bucknell, Personnel Manager, Atlas Copco Compressors Ltd, PO Box 79, Swindale Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 7HA.

Atlas Copco

LIVE OIL (UK) LIMITED

BUSINESS MANAGER

We are an expanding company, specialising in improved oil recovery, with contracts with the major oil companies in the North Sea. We are seeking to expand our client base in Europe and in particular the Middle East. We require a talented individual to act as our Business Manager, based in London.

You must have experience of working in the oil industry at a managerial level. You must be highly organised and have a proven track record in the formulation of marketing strategies and projects applicable to the oil industry.

You must have experience of reviewing and negotiating Middle Eastern oil contracts, and a thorough understanding of Arab culture. Middle Eastern contracts and a working knowledge of Arabic would be useful. An excellent command of English is essential.

Salary £32,000 pa.

Written replies only please, to Mr Noel Carroll at 28 Lees Place, London W1Y 3RN.

MARKETING MANAGER

Small company specialising in marine software for merchant ship management. Marketing Manager to be responsible for Far East sales. The successful applicant will be comfortable with contacts in the ship building industry in People's Republic of China. Fluency in written and spoken English and Mandarin is essential. Strong English an advantage. Salary commensurate with experience. Applications should be sent to Box No 1236, Times Newspapers Ltd, PO Box 3533, 1 Victoria Street, London E1 6BL.

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CIRCA £55k OTE +

We are seeking to recruit two Dealer Managers for our rapidly expanding Corporate Division.

Reporting to the Business Development Manager, the responsibilities will include the establishment and development of a national dealer network in order to create and control revenue streams in a highly competitive market. Extensive business-to-business sales and management background is essential, preferably within the telecommunications industry.

A competitive salary is offered along with a car and open-ended commission scheme, together with the opportunity to join First Telecom plc at an extremely interesting stage in our development.

AREA SALES/ACCOUNT MANAGERS

SOUTH WEST/MIDLANDS/NORTH

As part of a young dynamic corporate sales team your experience to date, combined with our training, will give you total responsibility for establishing the national and overseas telephone requirements for the corporate users within your own defined territory.

With the backing of our Telesales, Operations and Customer Services Division you will help provide custom made solutions in order to fulfil clients' needs.

With at least 2 years business-to-business sales experience, possibly within the telecoms industry, you should also display excellent communication skills and initiative.

You will be rewarded with a very generous package including strong basic salary, open-ended commission scheme and a quality car.

Our phenomenal growth to date and our imminent expansion into Europe means exceptional promotion opportunities for those people who make a success of these early days.

SENIOR REPORTER

Leading UK Chinese newspaper

is looking for a senior reporter

to work in London, UK.

must have previous

5 years

experience working with a Hong

Kong Chinese Media

conversant with social and political affairs in Hong Kong and UK; fluent in spoken and written

Chinese and English.

Detailed CV with salary

expected should be sent to

the Sing Tao, PO Box 2H2Z,

London, W1A 2HZ.

Applications for a period of one year.

Closing Date: November 26th 1996.

PART-TIME

Arabic-Language Media Position

£10.50 per hour (gross)

International organization in central London seeks native Arabic speaker to place articles in Arabic-language media. Good familiarity with electronic media, fluency in Arabic and English and computer skills are required. Demonstrable knowledge of media techniques and public relations is required. The position is part-time, 20hrs per week for a period of one year.

Applications in writing with full CV providing a day time telephone number to:

Box No 1285, PO Box 3553, 1 Virginia Street,
London E1 9GA.
Closing Date: November 26th 1996.

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NEWS

351 feared dead as planes collide

■ As many as 351 people are believed to have been killed in a mid-air collision between a Saudi Airways Boeing 747 and a Russian-built Ilyushin airliner of Kazakh Airways near Delhi last night. Witnesses described a fireball falling out of the sky.

The Indian Government ordered a judicial inquiry to determine if there was pilot error or whether air traffic controllers were to blame. Debris fell over flat farmland in a thinly populated area dotted with villages Page 1

Major opens war over 48-hour week

■ John Major paved the way for a confrontation with the European Union lasting up to and through the general election when he promised to reverse a verdict of the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg imposing a 48-hour maximum working week on Britain Pages 1, 9, 10, 18, 19

IRA terror raid

An IRA active service unit has raided a west London storage centre and carried off a terrorist cache, increasing fears that a Christmas bombing campaign is being planned Page 1

Gun compensation

Michael Howard tried to buy off a rebellion by Conservative MPs by doubling compensation for gun owners and excluding historical guns from the proposed ban on handguns Page 1

NHS paper leaked

Labour sought to derail a government attempt to seize the high ground on the NHS by leaking a draft white paper aimed at persuading voters that the service is safe in Tory hands Page 2

Paedophile priest

A Roman Catholic priest at the centre of an international paedophile ring swapping child pornography on the Internet was jailed for six years Page 3

Bumped out

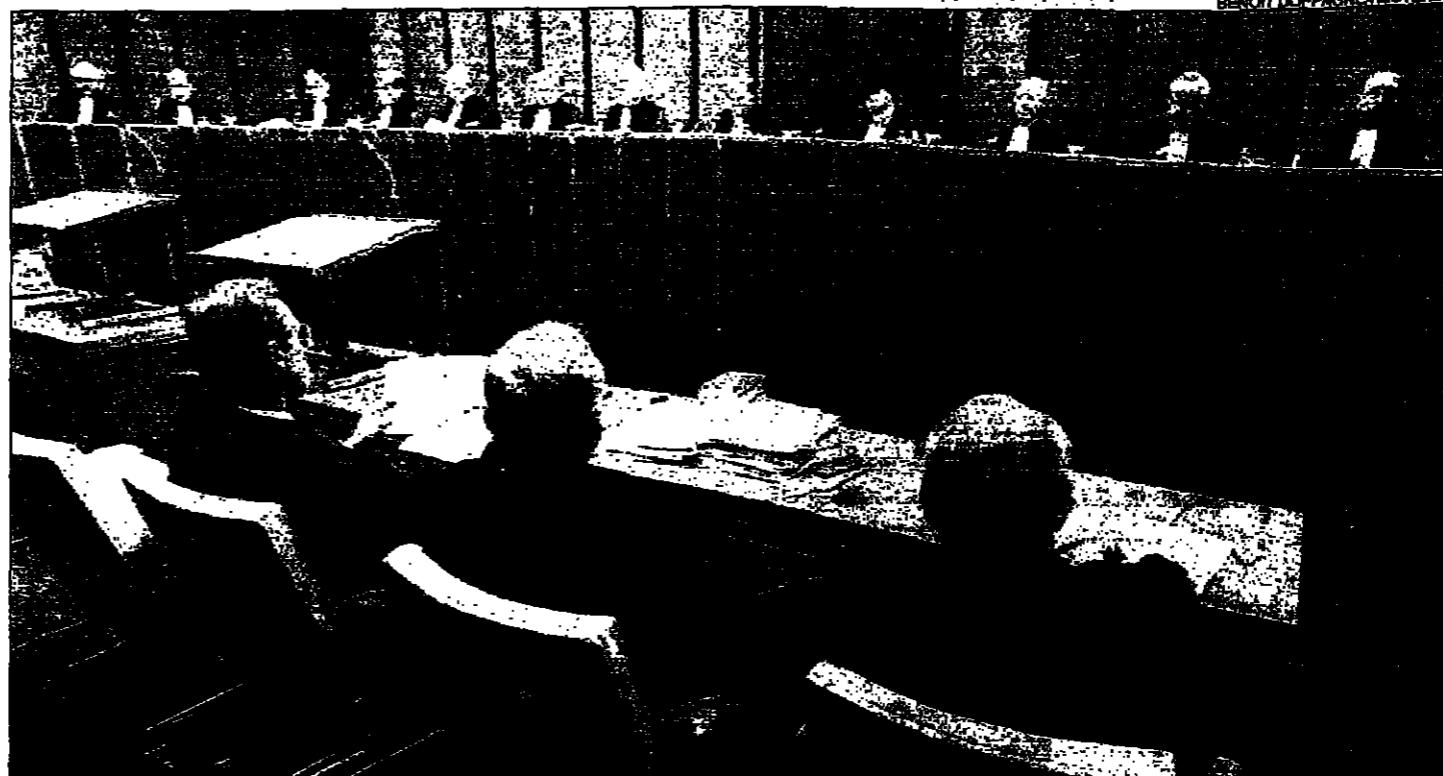
Jenny Fox, 6ft and 11½ stone, who was selected for her Cambridge college men's eight, has been forced out of the boat by the rules on single-sex crews Page 5

Space invaders

Searching for wayward asteroids that might collide with the Earth is no longer a fringe activity and astronomers agree that more work should be done Page 6

Poachers force caviare off the menu

■ The world market in caviare is in danger of collapse as uncontrolled poaching and smuggling of sturgeon from the Caspian Sea pushes the fish towards extinction, environmentalists and caviare importers said. Britain's imports of 30 tons a year worth £30 million could be nothing more than a memory in ten years' time Pages 7, 19



The European Court of Justice rejecting Britain's challenge on the 48-hour week in Luxembourg yesterday. Pages 1, 9, 10, 18, 19

BUSINESS

Nationwide: Britain's second biggest building society surprised the housing market by announcing a 0.25 per cent increase in its mortgage rate Page 25

Church lending: Cardinal Basil Hume has approved a pilot scheme for the Catholic Building Society to offer home loans through the church Page 25

Pensions: A City watchdog is to speed up compensation to victims of pensions mis-selling by reducing the questions they face to fewer than 10 Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index rose 19.9 points to close at 3034.3. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 90.5 90.6 after a rise from \$1.6459 to \$1.6467 and from DM2.4670 to DM2.4682 Page 28

Racing: One of the sport's most successful partnerships is to resume when Michael Stoute receives five yearlings to train for the Aga Khan Page 45



Tennis: British tennis past and present, as represented by Jeremy Bates and Tim Henman, made winning progress on the opening day of the national championships at Telford Page 49

Football: Terry Wilson, who retired at the age of 24 because of injury, will appear in the first round of the FA Cup for Rushden and Diamonds on Saturday Page 44

Rugby union: Ireland beat South Africa 28-25 in the A international, led by the Harlequins hooker Keith Wood, who has his eye on a British Isles tour place Page 43

Star status: Sonny Rollins is a legend of jazz, a master of improvisation, a stern perfectionist Page 57

Tarnished star: The revamped Boublil and Schonberg musical *Marien Guerre* is a lot better, with plenty to feast the eyes on, but Benedict Nightingale feels something is still missing Page 38

Walking tall: The new simple, minimalist style won't work without high, high heels. Maties will just look frumpy Page 16

ALAN COREN

Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be fossilised in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully Page 18

SIMON BARNES

Once we start off with Vinnie Jones as hero and Ryan Giggs as villain, there is no telling where we will end up Page 44

IN THE TIMES**FILMS**

Geoff Brown on First Wives Club starring Diane Keaton, Goldie Hawn and Bette Midler

BOOKS

George Melly on Picasso and Peter Stothard on The Discovery of the Past

The new belief: Nigella Lawson on astrology v religion and why we hedge our bets in admitting what we truly feel Page 17

Valerie Grove interviews Waife

Said as she waits to hear whether Oxford University will accept his £20 million offer Page 17

Walking tall: The new simple, minimalist style won't work without high, high heels. Maties will just look frumpy Page 16

WILL OF THE NATION: Newspapers have been crucial in reviving the need for the two-minutes' silence on Armistice Day Page 23

Radio Practitioners: Britain is to get its first full-time, student-operated commercial station Page 22

BUILT TO INSPIRE: Bristol City Council has built a three-bedroom energy-efficient house that costs £65 a year to heat Page 33

Simon Jenkins

Hong Kong has changed a great deal from the colonial satrapy that I visited ten years ago. It is almost a mature political entity. The colony's greatest challenge has been corruption. But there is no comparison between its experience of this plague and the massive corruption that passes for "opening up the economy" in China. Just wait and see Page 18

ALAN COREN

Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be fossilised in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully Page 18

SIMON BARNES

Once we start off with Vinnie Jones as hero and Ryan Giggs as villain, there is no telling where we will end up Page 44

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HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Guernsey 17C

(59F); lowest day max: Avermore, Highland 14C (57F); highest rainfall: Hunstanton, Norfolk 1.6cm;

highest sunshine: Glasgow, 5.9hr

AROUND BRITAIN & IRELAND

24 hrs to 5pm b=bright; c=cloudy; d=dizlike; ds=dark storm; du=dark; f=fair; g=grey; h=half

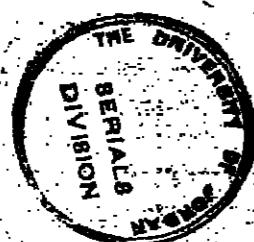
l=light; m=mist; n=night; o=overcast; r=rain; s=sunny; sh=sunny showers; st=stiff and sunny; t=totally

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SUN RAIN MAX

JPM 150

25



THE TIMES

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Twin turrets that
could be yours
in the countryside
PAGE 33

ARTS

MTV winner: see it
and buy it, says
David Sinclair
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Mackie in the fast
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of world athletics
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AND
RADIO
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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 13 1996

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SIB acts to speed up redress for pensions mis-selling

By ROBERT MILLER

THE City's most senior watchdog will today unveil plans to speed up the £4 billion personal pensions mis-selling review by cutting the questions that must be answered before victims can qualify for compensation. Initially they had to answer 200 questions. The number is now being reduced to less than 10.

The Securities and Investments Board (SIB), headed by Sir Andrew Large, has decided to act after becoming concerned at the lack of progress since the review began in

1993. The SIB set a December 31 deadline for the most urgent 500,000 "priority" cases to have been completed and the victims reinstated in their old schemes. If reinstatement was not possible, then the life office is expected to top up personal pension schemes with a comparable sum.

As recently as last week Sir Andrew said: "Two years ago we said that the aim should be a review of most cases by the end of the year. Yet it is now clear that this target will be missed by a mile, with little more than 5 per cent of cases

completed and only £50 million of redress offered."

Over the past few months the SIB and the Personal Investment Authority, the watchdog for firms selling direct to the public which has set up a special Pensions Unit to oversee the review, have conducted extensive tests with occupational schemes to decide if investors who were wrongly advised to leave generous work pension schemes for the uncertainty of a private pension plan, will be disadvantaged by the proposed streamlined questionnaire.

The watchdog claims that very few

will suffer because of a speed-up. Consumer bodies, however, are expected to express concern that some will receive less in compensation under the new system. The streamlined SIB questionnaire is designed to help trustees of occupational schemes to locate investors' records and to decide how much compensation would be needed to reinstate that person back to where they would have been had they not been wrongly advised. Many scheme trustees complain they have been overwhelmed with paperwork and requests for information from

life offices and that they are not equipped to deal with the volumes. At least one scheme is believed to have a six-month backlog of work.

In a separate move yesterday Denis Brown, a member of the PIA board and a registered insurance broker, resigned his post over a disagreement on professional indemnity insurance cover for independent financial advisers (IFA), which pays out in the event of a claim for pensions mis-selling compensation being made against an adviser. Mr Brown said in his resignation letter to Joe Palmer, PIA

chairman, that he was "profoundly troubled by the PIA's attitude in forcing members to disclose privileged documents which subsequently invalidate their PI cover".

Garry Heath, chief executive of the IFA Association, the trade body for independent advisers, said: "The regulator has been guilty of holding up the review by trying to impose requirements upon member firms which conflict with the normal terms and conditions of PI insurance."

Pennington, page 27

Nationwide raises rate for million borrowers

By CAROLINE MERRELL AND ROBERT MILLER

NATIONWIDE, the UK's second biggest building society, yesterday surprised the housing market by announcing a 0.25 per cent increase in its mortgage rate.

Some see the rise as a climbdown by the society on its pledge to give the benefits of mutuality to members by offering the best savings and loans rates.

The society is only the second lender to react to the 0.25 per cent increase in base rates announced earlier this month.

Last week, Birmingham Midshires announced an increase in mortgage rates from 6.99 per cent to 7.24 per cent. Nationwide's variable rate will go up to 6.74 per cent on December 1, affecting a million borrowers.

The society claimed that it had to increase rates so it could give a better deal to savers. Savers with the society outnumber borrowers six to one.

Nationwide's savings rate has been increased by between 0.1 and 0.3 per cent. Others in the industry claimed the society was taking advantage of the fact that, as the housing market approaches the quiet "dog days" of winter, it was a perfect time to restore its margins.

On a £50,000 repayment mortgage, the rate increase means the monthly costs will rise from £319 to £326.

Philip Williamson, Nationwide's marketing and commercial director, said: "Over the next few months, many savers with converting building societies who are currently locked into accounts paying less competitive rates of interest will be able to move their investments. I am sure they will be attracted by our excellent savings rates and we



Eye on the ball: Philip de Gruyville, centre, England's rugby captain, is a marketing consultant of Druid Group, the management consultancy seeking a market flotation valued at £62.9 million. Also in the line-up are, from left, John Pocock, commercial director; Rob Kimber, financial director; David Tebb, chairman; and David Thompson, managing director

Norweb Retail jobs to go

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

AT LEAST half of Norweb Retail's 2,800 staff are set to lose their jobs after Kingfisher's purchase of the business from United Utilities

for £29 million.

Kingfisher will close Norweb's 57 high street stores, its head office in Bolton and a distribution centre in Greater Manchester.

Up to half of its 81 out-of-town stores are also expected to be shut. Those remaining will become part of Kingfisher's 224-store Comet chain.

Kingfisher will pay United Utilities £51 million in cash for the loss-making business, but then receive £22 million back to cover the costs of restructuring, including redundancies.

Brian Staples, chief executive of United Utilities, said:

"We are surprised the Nationwide has gone so early. We have no immediate plans to increase its rates." The society already has one of the best variable on the market, at 5.74 per cent.

Pennington, page 27

Our mutual friends, page 29

Davis' surprise move.

AXA to merge with rival UAP

By MARIANNE CURPHAY

AXA and Union des Assurances de Paris (UAP), the two big French insurers, yesterday revealed plans to merge to create the world's second largest insurer – and set off a wave of market speculation in the UK.

The announcement, which followed rumours in France that AXA would make a bid for UAP, was accompanied by a request from the two companies for their shares to be suspended in Paris.

The move will create an insurer with a turnover of Fr300 billion and a stock market capitalisation of Fr100 billion. Shares in Sun Life & Provincial Holdings, which is partly owned by UAP and was floated on the UK stock market in June, gained 6.2p to 244.1p, boosted by analysts' belief that the merger would be good for UAP.

Legal & General put on 7.2p to 333.5p amid expectations that the insurance industry would undergo more consolidation and that L&G would be a target. Guardian Royal Exchange rose 1.1p to 259.4p even though Standard & Poor's, the credit rating agency, yesterday graded its life

assurance arm BBB- (Adequate) on its ability to pay claims because of its decline in new business volumes and high expenses.

The deal is the latest in a wave of mergers and takeovers which are sweeping the industry. The most recent in the UK was between Royal Insurance and Sun Alliance, when a £5.4 billion merger created Royal & Sun Alliance.

Claude Bébér, AXA chairman, said: "I have always been convinced that in order to survive in the 21st century you have to have a world-scale business and a size which allows you to compete with the big boys." Only Nippon Life will be larger than the new company.

M. Bébér will chair the management board of the newly merged company and Jacques Friedmann, UAP chairman, will chair the supervisory board and head a committee deciding strategy.

Both men said that the merger

would not lead to massive job cuts.

The deal involves an exchange of four AXA shares

for ten UAP shares.

Tempus, page 28

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Home loans from Catholic investments

By ROBERT MILLER
AND JOE JENKINS

CARDINAL Basil Hume, leader of Britain's seven million Roman Catholics, has given his blessing to a pilot scheme for the Catholic Building Society to offer home loans through the Church.

The £27 million Catholic society, one of the smallest but most respected UK societies, will initially offer mortgages mainly to women and low-income families through a team of unpaid

volunteer representatives in the Westminster diocese. If successful, the project will be extended to Catholic churches around the country.

The society was founded in 1960 to provide mortgages for women and single mothers, by Wing Commander Paddy Byrne, a Second World War Spitfire pilot, and his wife Nona, who is chairman of the society and who still cooks the boardroom lunches for the directors. In turn, the directors are expected to visit personally in cases

where difficulties are experienced in keeping up home loan repayments.

Francis Higgins, Catholic managing director, yesterday confirmed that the Catholic Church had given the green light to the society. He said: "Cardinal Hume did express serious concern that while the society and the church have always had a harmonious and happy relationship that mortgages was the cut and thrust commercial world. We have assured him that literature and information on our

THE CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Bank warns of dangers in the rush for EMU

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE Bank of England warned EU member states against taking economic risks in trying to meet the timetable for a single currency — emphasising that to do so might threaten economic and political cohesion across Europe.

Instead, Eddie George, the Bank's Governor, urged all EU countries to maintain policies aimed at promoting both macroeconomic discipline and structural flexibility, regardless of whether full monetary union was achieved by all member states.

In a tough speech to the Confederation of British Industry's annual conference,

Simon fears isolation

SIR David Simon, BP chairman, urged Britain to move swiftly to enter European monetary union to avoid isolation and exposure to currency fluctuations (Christine Buckley writes).

He said: "A single currency is a logical extension of the single market of which Mrs Thatcher made us a member in 1985. The market of 370 million is the key to British growth and wealth creation."

However Sir John Hoskyns, chairman of Burton Group, gave warning of the cost of entering monetary union, which has been calculated at £22 billion for retailers alone.

Irish cast eyes over Far East

FROM EILEEN McCABE IN DUBLIN

DCC, the industrial holding company based in the Irish Republic, is targeting the Far East, particularly Japan, Singapore and China, for expansion. Jim Flavin, chief executive, said yesterday.

Buoyed by a 14.7 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £111 million before exceptional gains, DCC plans to focus on forging links for its computer services sector and on small acquisitions in its healthcare division.

"The Far East is where all the action is and we are laying down seeds and forming alliances to make sure we take advantage of that," Mr Flavin said at the announcement of the company's interim results.

The sale of its share in Heitons, the Irish building provider, and the restructuring of its stake in Allied Foods together accounted for an exceptional gain in the first half of £14.5 million. Including the exceptional gain, profits jumped 54 per cent to

almost £15.7 million, with earnings per share of 14.6p. Adjusted earnings per share were up 14 per cent to 10.13p.

Three of the company's four divisions recorded strong growth with DCC Healthcare notching up a 194 per cent increase in operating profit to £2.8 million. That improvement was largely down to the inclusion of Days Medical Aids, the British mobility products company acquired last November.

But profits at DCC Sercom, the computer services division, dropped 21 per cent to £2.7 million in the first half because of a dramatic decline in the market for printed computer documentation.

Mr Flavin said DCC had spent £17.4 million on acquisitions in the first half and had now almost completed the planned buyout of minority interests in group companies.

DCC declared a 12 per cent rise in the interim dividend to 3.04p, payable on January 9.

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Notice of Interest Rates for Businesses, Charities and Societies effective from 13th November, 1996

Reserve Account and High Interest Clients Account (for Professional Advisers)

	gross interest rate p.a.	gross compounded annual rate
£100,000+	3.375%	3.41%
£25,000-£99,999	3.00%	3.03%
£10,000-£24,999	2.375%	2.39%

The gross interest rate is before deduction of tax. The gross compounded annual rate is the rate where gross interest payments are retained on the account during the year. Interest rates are subject to variation.



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Eddie George told the CBI Conference that EU member states must take seriously the economic "risks" when they make decisions about EMU

Beckett promises to cut red tape

BY OUR INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

LABOUR sought to take even more of the Conservatives' ground on business when it pledged to maintain in Government the drive against regulation.

The move by Labour signals a further advance by the party's leadership into areas traditionally associated with the Conservatives, and an explicit rejection of Labour as a party of over-regulation.

Speaking at a conference breakfast, Margaret Beckett, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, said: "A Labour Government would not seek to tie up industry in red tape. We want to reduce the burden of petty regulation, and we will maintain a deregulatory

She said Labour had been told the CBI: "We want to work with business to see what can be done to manage regulation better." She added that good regulation could be a "spur, not a deterrent". Mrs Beckett made it clear that Labour did not disagree with

everything the Conservatives had done towards business, especially in the last two or three years, mentioning specifically Business Links, the Technology Foresight programme, modern apprenticeships and the business-led

Training and Enterprise Councils. A Labour government, she said, would seek to build on such moves — many of which had originally been suggested by Labour.

Insisting there were large areas of agreement between new Labour and business, Mrs Beckett made a strong case for manufacturing industry. She said: "Manufacturing must always be the basis for our wealth." She also called on the Government to abandon its prejudices and join Europe in discussing social issues, as a new Labour government would do by signing the European social charter, and she forecast that whatever party was in power, eventually it would sign up.

Business leaders yesterday urged Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, to reject calls for tax cuts in order to fuel the "feel-good" factor ahead of the election (Philip Bassett writes).

The CBI called on the Chancellor to exercise fiscal restraint in the Budget this month and to produce measures aimed at encouraging investment and repairing public finances. CBI leaders said that many of the economic uncertainties which concerned industry at the

time of the CBI's last conference a year ago had now been resolved — mainly favourably.

Andrew Buxton, chairman of Barclays Bank, and the CBI's economic affairs committee, gave warning that significant personal tax cuts would present as many risks to the economy as opportunities. "I am sure the Chancellor is more sensible than to listen to those calling for significant tax cuts in order to fuel a greater 'feel-good' factor, when it is already there."

Clarke urged to show restraint

Labour pledges to establish new pensions advisory body

BY ROBERT MILLER

AN INCOMING Labour government will make the creation of an independent pensions body to advise about the state of retirement provision a top priority. John Denham, the party's pensions spokesman, told a conference in London yesterday.

Mr Denham, addressing the National Association of Pension Funds, said that the new body would be "independent, authoritative, properly representing the interests of employers, employees, pension providers, pensioners and consumers".

To encourage the pensions industry to provide solutions as to how a Labour government might launch a second

pension so that people make better provision for their retirement, such as "stakeholder pensions" or using the existing structure of the state earnings related pension scheme for a "citizenship pension". Mr Denham proposed a new "investors in pensions" award.

He added that such an award would become a sought after commendation for pension schemes. "It would give a proper recognition of those who set the highest standards in pension provision and set a benchmark against which employers, employees and trustees could measure the quality of their own scheme."

Speaking for the Government, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Social Security Minister, offered an olive branch to NAPF delegates over the complex rules and regulations of the Pensions Act, which comes into full force in April.

He said: "I am very conscious that some of the legislation requires you to look at several Acts and regulations. So I believe that we shall need to consider at what stage this legislation can be consolidated and brought together ... My challenge is 'what are you prepared to do to simplify pensions'?"

He added: "Focus on what and then let us talk about what might be possible so that together we can build on the

strengths of the UK pension system. I can promise to look constructively at what we can hack away."

Meanwhile, John Hayes, chairman of the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority, the new statutory watchdog, spoke out on the duties of "whistleblowers".

He said that the authority wanted to encourage the reporting of breaches large and small in a spirit that said it was not the end of the world to confess to a breach.

He added: "What is important in most cases in the early days is putting it right, doing it in a reasonable time, and sticking to that time."

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Tax reasons against expensive demerger SIB to accelerate misselling review Nationwide's rapid rate reversal

SO two and two does not add up to five after all, even if this negative conclusion is not going to be reflected in the fees of the various advisers who worked for months on the possible demerger of Allied Domecq.

There were still optimists yesterday who hoped that next year, or the year after, or the year after that might see the long-awaited split between drinks brands and the ill-matched retail operations. Fair enough, the market must trade on something, and that rumour has fuelled enough business since the appointment of Sir Christopher Hogg as chairman this spring. But Sir Christopher, even though he may have engineered a similar split at Courtaulds, is a man who means what he says, and he described such an exercise at Allied as an "expensive distraction".

The reasons are various but compelling. The first problem is tax. Retailing would have most of its business in Britain through Allied's 4,000-strong pub chain. The drinks side would operate worldwide, with a relatively limited turnover within these shores. The result would be a mass of advanced corporation tax arising within the spirits business that could not, as now, be relieved by UK earnings.

The second is the sheer cost of the exercise, running into hundreds of millions, including the

tax bill and those advisers' fees. Third, there is some weird kind of synergy, if a limited one, between the various businesses, even if no one in their right mind would set out from scratch to create a group taking in spirits, franchised ice cream and doughnut bars and local bakers.

The best reason not to demerge is that there is enough to do without spending valuable time elsewhere. Unfortunately the decision throws into sharp relief the weaknesses of those core businesses. The pubs are the best of the lot, managing an underlying profits rise of 5 per cent on turnover up 2 per cent. Allied's chain may not be the most original, either concepts pirated from elsewhere, as with the Wacky Warehouse kiddie hell-holes, or bought in from outside like the Firkin pubs, but the group knows how to run them.

The spirits operation, like all the other big drinks groups, has suffered from worldwide destocking and still has too many brands. But Allied has the added disadvantages of being, in virtually every market and every drinks sector, the second biggest

brand, and of its heavy exposure to difficult trading areas such as Mexico and Spain through the ill-fated purchase in 1994 of Domecq.

These factors, and the dire state of the brewing operation since it was merged with Carlsberg, explain why the share price over the past four years has lost half its value relative to the FTSE All-Share Index, while a yield on the dividends of 6.6 per cent demonstrates the City's scepticism. The exit from brewing is now achieved and demerger speculation largely laid to rest, but it is going to be a long, slow slog from here.

Geriatic pace of pensions inquiry

It has been said here before, and every delay makes it all the more true, the personal pensions misselling review has become a national scandal. Yes, it is complex and yes, sterling efforts have been made by some life offices, notably Barclays Life, to expedite matters. But three years after the Securities and Investments



Board first formally flagged its concerns over the scale of misselling, only £50 million or so has been paid in compensation to those who lost out.

Set this against an expected compensation bill of between £25 and £3 billion to which you can add a further £1 billion to cover the costs of identifying those who suffered and putting this right. How can the public, urged by politicians across the political spectrum to make more provision for their own retirement, be expected to have any faith in the pensions industry with the misselling review still so far from being resolved?

Insurance companies, which should play a leading role in making sure people are well

provided for in retirement, have instead been revealed as behaving like used car salesmen. They have shown scant heed for those whose financial futures they were jeopardising.

Regulators have a central role to play in restoring public confidence. Imro, the regulator for fund managers, has made firm and effective moves in this direction. It recently fined four members well over £400,000 for rule breaches in relation to pension misselling. By contrast, fellow watchdog the Personal Investment Authority, on whom the biggest part of the review falls, has fined 29 firms a total of just £16,500 for late filing or failure to file details of how their own reviews were progressing.

The SIB, the *capo di tutti capi* among regulators, will today reveal its plans for accelerating the whole mess. Perhaps now is the time to get seriously tough, and for the PIA to take a leaf out of Imro's book. As one senior Imro source put it yesterday: "Firms left to their own devices may be tempted to be concerned more with their bottom line than investors' interests. The regu-

lator's job is to restore the balance to their thinking, and the possibility of discipline is very effective." Quite.

Marginalised by margins

SO much for building societies' so-called reward schemes, which aim to spread the benefits of staying mutual among savers and borrowers rather than handing out large amounts of cash or shares to both.

The Nationwide's decision to raise mortgage and savings rates follows the less well-noted rise by the Birmingham Midshires last week. Both societies have sworn their allegiance to mutuality, and the Nationwide's reward programme is designed to prove this commitment. But the need to increase rates now shows the extent that the margins of the Nationwide are being hit by the scheme, intended to match the value of the windfalls being paid by those other societies that are going to market and converting into banks.

The margin issue is crucial for

societies because of their need to attract funds in the wholesale market. To achieve this, their ratios must be in good repair. The Nationwide's previous rate of 6.49 per cent for mortgages has actually only applied since September, although it was announced with much brouhaha in July. It was well below the 6.99 per cent currently being charged by such as the Woolwich and the Halifax, which are planning to demutualise. The Nationwide is making much of its increases in rates payable to savers. But though these compare well with larger competitors, savers can still do better among the medium-sized societies. Other societies with variable rates lower than their competitors will now scramble to follow.

Windfall whingers

THERE was a Peter Sellers film some years ago in which the actor played a well-meaning vicar who gave food away to the deserving poor. The result was squabbling among the needy over just who got what. All too cynical; except that every building society handing out free cash or shares to its members, the latest being the Alliance & Leicester, seems to have attracted a ginger group either after more freebies or demanding that others should get less.

Allied Domecq rules out split as wine and spirits decline

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

ALLIED DOMEcq, the food and drinks business, ruled out a demerger of its spirits business in the short term, saying it would instead concentrate on improving its operating performance (see Pennington, this page).

The company also disappointed the City with lacklustre full-year results and its shares fell 4p at 454p.

Profit before tax, excluding exceptional charges, fell 11 per cent to £575 million, while turnover slipped back slightly to £4.54 billion.

Sir Christopher Hogg, chairman, said the company

had examined the demerger issue but had decided that the resulting taxation costs were too high. He added there was no obvious shareholder value to be unlocked and said there were some synergies between the businesses. But the company said it would not rule out a demerger at some point, once the operating performance had improved.

The fall in overall profits was mainly caused by a 14 per cent decline in profits in the wine and spirit division to £419 million. The company said it had been forced to remove 580,000 cases of spirits

from the US market due to overstocking.

Turnover fell 5 per cent to £2.7 billion as the company suffered a 5 per cent fall in volumes in the Americas, excluding Mexico, and a 1 per cent fall in Europe.

Allied has improved stock-taking policies and the destocking phase is now largely complete. The company hopes to make cautious price rises and is aiming to improve its brand marketing.

The retailing division, which includes pubs and fast-food outlets, increased operating profits 4 per cent to £223

million. The strongest performance came in the managed pub division — which owns brands such as Farkin, Scruffy Murphy and Wacky Warehouses — where profits rose 13 per cent to £125 million.

Profits at Victoria Wine, the off-licence chain, fell 11 million, while franchising profits from the Baskin-Robbins and Dunkin' Donuts brands, fell 8 per cent.

Allied said it was aiming to continue the expansion of its branded pubs and would concentrate on further cost reductions. Exceptional charges totalled £311 million with the

biggest cost being a book value write-off after the £205 million sale of the company's 50 per cent stake in Carlsberg-Tetley to Bass.

Allied does not anticipate any more heavy restructuring costs and is on track to cut operating costs by £3.5 million by the end of 1998.

The total dividend is held at 23.5p. Allied hopes to improve the dividend cover, which stands at 1.4 times, in the near future. A final dividend of 14.15p is payable on February 21.

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Overstocking hits Eurodis expectations

SHARES OF Eurodis Electron, the electronic components distributor, formed from a merger last year, fell 15p to 138½p after the company gave warning that it is unlikely to improve profits this year (Paul Durman writes).

Although sales volumes remain "relatively stable", excess stocks of components have made it difficult to increase prices, putting pressure on profit margins.

Robert Leigh, chairman, said that the company is overstocked by about £2 million, and it could be a number of months before demand catches up with supply.

GA falls behind at 9-month stage

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

GENERAL ACCIDENT, the composite insurance company, suffered a fall in operating profits in the first nine months of the year but said improved life results had limited the damage.

Despite the 11 per cent drop in profit from £551 million to £311 million, GA shares rose 11p to 78½p. The insurer said that it had suffered weather losses of £58 million mainly because of the winter storms in the US earlier this year. The total worldwide underwriting loss was £166 million.

However, there were good results from UK life and pensions sales after the integration of Provident Mutual.

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Middle East deals lift Vosper 11%

By OLIVER AUGUST

VOSPER Thornycroft, the warship builder, increased half-year profits 11 per cent on the back of three Middle East export deals while also branching out further into facilities management.

Saudi Arabia has accepted delivery of seven Minehunters equipped with Vosper sonar, and the second of the East Strike Craft for Qatar in the Gulf has reached its destination. An Omani order for Corvette ships is due to be completed later this month.

Pre-tax profits for the six months to September 30 rose from £11.4 million to £12.7 million. Earnings per share were up 8 per cent to 25.8p and the interim dividend was lifted 10 per cent to 7.5p.

More than a third of turnover now comes from activities independent of warship contracts. In the first half, Vosper finalised a five-year facilities management contract with GCHQ and signed a 15-year deal with the Royal Navy to maintain its training sites.

Tempus, page 28

CSC grows and seeks £204m

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

CAPITAL Shopping Centres, one of Britain's largest retail property companies, plans to raise £204 million through a rights issue to support its investment programme. It has also upgraded significantly its net asset value for the second time in three months.

The company said yesterday that open market valuations of its eight completed shopping centres — including Lakeside, Thurrock and the MetroCentre, Gateshead —

gave a net asset value of £1.46 billion. This is equivalent to 293p a share, 20p higher than at the last upgrading in August. It said rental growth has been "significantly above average" in the retail property market.

CSC will issue one 6½ per cent subordinated convertible 100p bond for every two 50p CSC ordinary shares held. The bonds are convertible after January 22, 1997 and before December 31, 2006 into

Tempus, page 28

General Accident

STRONG THIRD-QUARTER PERFORMANCE

9-MONTHS' RESULTS

	9 MONTHS TO 30.9.95 ESTIMATE £M	9 MONTHS TO 30.9.95 ESTIMATE £M
General Premiums	3,447	3,302
Life Premiums	1,340	1,131
Underwriting Result	(166)	(62)
Net Investment Income	409	372
Life Profits	77	53
Operating Profit before Taxation	311	351
Profit attributable to Ordinary Shareholders	346	292
Operating Earnings per Ordinary Share	44.0p	52.3p

- Operating pre-tax profit of £311m follows a profit in the third quarter up 23% at £117m.
- Strong growth in investment earnings.
- Worldwide underwriting deficit of £166m includes increased severe weather losses of £58m.
- Underwriting profit achieved in the UK.
- Good third-quarter performance in the United States.
- Strong performances in New Zealand and Asia.
- Further excellent progress in the profitability of UK life and pensions sales.
- Current solvency margin 79%. Net assets per ordinary share 690p.

Group Chief Executive Bob Scott comments:

"A positive underlying performance in all our major business units worldwide has continued during the third quarter and we would expect this trend to be maintained."

General Accident plc, World Headquarters, Pitheavlis, Perth, Scotland PH2 0NH

Our results are available on the Internet: <http://www.gac.co.uk>

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STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

Dominion may be near to East Midlands deal

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FINANCIAL advisers to Dominion Resources were reckoned to be burning the midnight oil last night in an attempt to pave the way for an agreed bid for East Midlands Electricity.

Word from the Square Mile suggests a deal may be close with the US power generator ready to offer between 650p and 660p a share, provided it gets the backing of the East Midlands board. Such terms would value the regional electricity company at £1.28 billion.

Shares of East Midlands again crept higher yesterday, ending 7½ up to 616p, in anticipation of the terms from Dominion, or the appearance of a second bidder.

Dominion was forced to disclose its hand last week after a sharp rise in the East Midlands share price, but it said it would not be paying much above 608p a share.

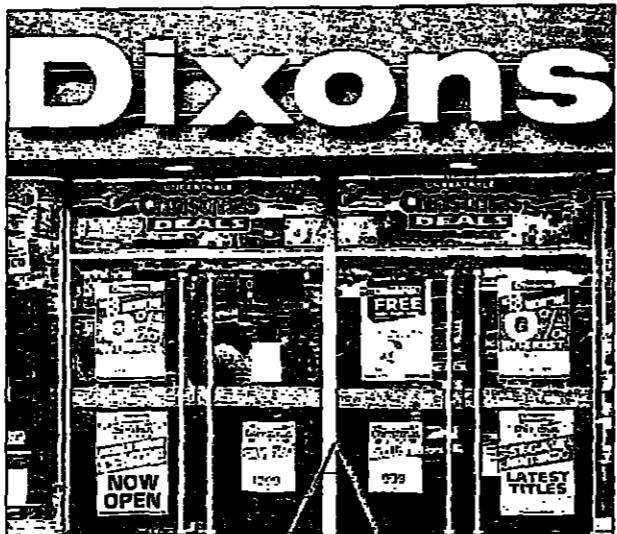
Elsewhere, a strong performance overnight on Wall Street and further gains among government securities put equities in good stead. In the event the FT-SE 100 index closed near its best of the day with a rise of 19.9 at 3,924.3, although turnover remained thin with only 657 million shares changing hands.

A stock shortage continued to power Dixons sharply higher, with the price adding 18½p to 560p as 2.1 million shares changed hands. A survey from the British Retail Consortium said high street sales had continued to grow during September, with those of electrical goods particularly promising in the run-up to Christmas. Cazenove is reckoned to have further cheered investors by raising its profit forecast. UBS and Warburg are also reckoned to be buyers of Dixons and only last week NatWest Securities increased its rating to a "buy".

Also in the retail sector, Blacks Leisure rose 10p to 325p, Body Shop 3p to 211p, Hamleys 14½p to 430p, Next 5p to 546p and Tie Rack 3p to 187p. But Burton slipped 3p to 141½p as rumours persisted it might bid for House of Fraser. Up firmer at 136½p, Signet Group was steady at 259p as Salomon Brothers emerged as a holder of nine million shares, or 3.09 per cent.

The proposed merger between AXA Midi and UAP focused attention on Sun Life, up 6½p to 244½p. Cookson shrugged off recent weakness

DIXONS



Sales of electrical goods are promising in the Christmas run-up

to score a 10p rise at 222½p. Overnight the group reported a sharp increase in its bill-to-bill sales. But RTZ fell 14p to 91½p reflecting a profit downgrade by Kleinwort Benson, the broker.

Thistle Hotels, a newcomer, finished 3p better at 165½p after some positive comments from Merrill Lynch, the broker. Reckitt & Colman dipped

British Airways climbed 10p to 592p as 5 million shares were traded. City speculators expect the Government to approve the proposed link-up with American Airlines. It will give the two companies the lion's share of the north transatlantic market and, brokers say, boost the share price even further.

7p to 705p as a line of 2.2 million shares went through the market. SBC Warburg placed them with institutions at 706p as part of a delayed trade.

Allied Domecq fell a further 13p to 45½p after it finally paid up to speculate that it intended to demerge its spirits and retail operations. Sir Christopher Hogg, chairman, said he wanted to develop the

market with an underwriting profit of £9 million in its third-quarter figures in spite

The shares now stand just 22p above their low for the year.

A better than expected set of half-year figures lifted Amersham International 23½p to 10.26. Brokers expressed satisfaction with the 22 per cent rise in the half-year payout to 6p.

General Accident surprised the market with an underwriting profit of £9 million in its third-quarter figures in spite

In the future pit, the December series of the long gilt saw its lead cut to just five ticks at £109½ as the total number of contracts completed rose to 50,000.

In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 also rose nine ticks to £101½, while among shorter dated issues, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was £1 firmer at £102½.

□ **NEW YORK:** Wall Street stocks posted only modest gains at midday, with the Dow Jones industrial average shaking off an earlier bout of profit-taking after a four-day bull run. The index was up 7.83 points to 6,263.43.

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DIXONS: LOOKING FOR A PROSPEROUS RUN-UP TO CHRISTMAS

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LIFFE

COCOA

Dec - 894.95 Mar - 1000-1010

Mar - 825.24 May - 1001-1010

Jul - 825.24 Aug - 1001-1010

Sep - 825.24 Oct - 1001-1010

Dec - 825.24 Volume: 4953

□ **ROBUSTA COFFEE (S)**

Aug - 1375-1415

Sep - 1445-1485

Mar - 1395-1425

May - 1395-1425

Volume: 3477

□ **WHITE SUGAR (FOB)**

Sept 31.7

Dec - 312.7

Mar - 314.5-314.8

May - 314.5-314.8

Volume: 2677

□ **MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION**

Average fatback price in representative markets on November 9

(pig/kg)

Pig - Sheep - Cattle

GB - 10.25 - 10.30

Eng/Wales - 10.04 - 10.34

Wales - 0.06 - 0.08

Scotland - 10.04 - 10.34

Ireland - 10.04 - 10.34

N.Ireland - 1.57 - 12.39

Pork - 10.25 - 10.30

Beef - 10.25 - 10.30

Lamb - 10.25 - 10.30

Veal - 10.25 - 10.30

Cattle - 10.25 - 10.30

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Pork -

**THE
TIMES**
**CITY
DIARY**

**Hand in hand
at Ronson**

HOWARD HODGSON raised eyebrows yesterday after Christine Pickles was appointed acting finance director at Ronson, where the former funeral director holds sway.

Miss Pickles, who moves into David Moffatt's seat, enjoys a little more than a professional relationship with Mr Hodgson. "It's the sort of thing that happens in offices," says James Roe, Ronson's chairman. "It's got nothing to do with the business," he insists. Mr Roe, who is also standing down because of pressure of work, is to be replaced by company doctor Shaun Dowling. A former Guinness executive, Mr Dowling will be in a good position to keep an eye on the love birds.

On the ball

SAVE & PROSPER, sponsor of the rugby internationals at Twickenham, has picked the winners in the competition run by the City Diary to name the sponsor and the new England captain. Readers Chris Mallows, of Horsham, West Sussex; David Lovebury, of Orell Park, Liverpool; and Adam Willmott, of Fulham, west London, all plumped for Philip de Glanville as captain and win tickets for the match between England and Italy. In spite of a dozen entries from Nicholas Dargan, a management accountant at Exco, not one of his numerous entries was picked. Next time Nick, don't just photocopy the same entry, at least try different handwriting.



"I was looking forward to a 48-hour week"

Gins up

IN the face of falling profits at Allied Domecq, Sir Christopher Hogg and Tony Hale went to the cinema last night, with the Queen. The chairman and chief executive were at the Royal premiere of *True Blue*. As sponsor of the University Boat Race since the American mutiny in 1987, Beefeater was supplying marini at the star-studded premiere.

Song for Sly

EDGAR BRONFMAN Jnr, Seagram's CEO, has turned tail on the dog-eat-dog world of business, and penned the slushy theme song for Sylvester Stallone's new film. Under the testosterone-packed pseudonym "Sam Ronson", he has horrified colleagues who think it takes a rotter to run a £14 billion drinks empire. "Just your breath in the night / can make me feel all right / when you sigh as you're drifting away / Oh baby" is just a taste of Bronfman's lyrics from *Wherever There's Love*. One wonders what tipple the crooner was taking.

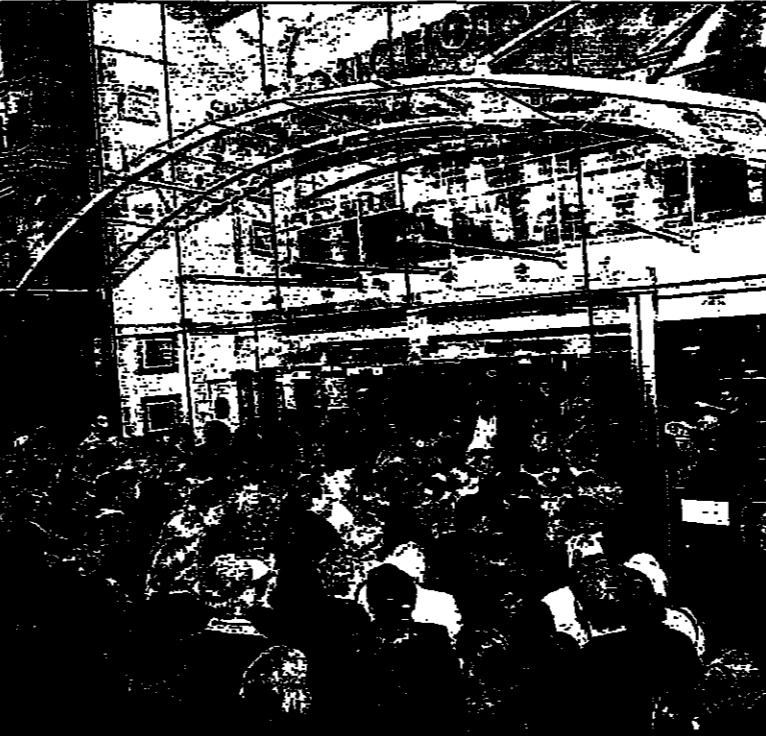
Web of intrigue

PENSIONER Patrick Mountain yesterday launched his own site on the Internet for investors angry at the Alliance & Leicester's conversion terms. Users can source background information, see what the action group has achieved and view suggestions on how to protest. There is also a blank page for the building society to respond.

MORAG PRESTON

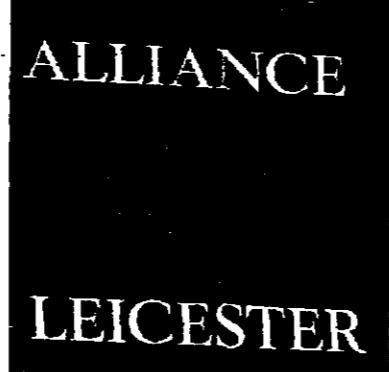


Unlike the building societies, Kenneth Clarke is not expected to provide the sort of big giveaways in the Budget that will encourage shoppers to spend



Our mutual friends restore the needed 'feel-good' factor

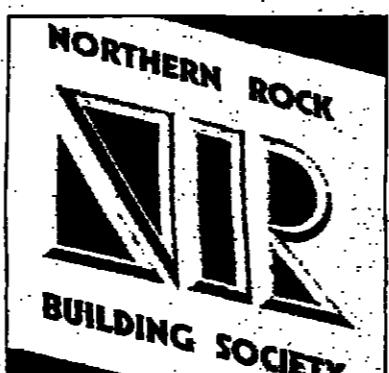
Caroline Merrell finds that everyone's a winner in the Great British giveaway



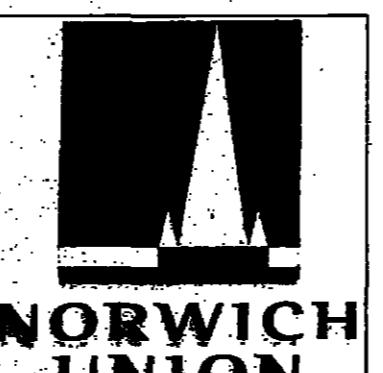
A&L: members will receive £1,000



Halifax: £1,000 to shareholders



Northern Rock: offers £900 payout



Norwich Union: £500 to members



Woolwich: £1,000 for shareholders



Bristol & West: plans to pay £700

A total of £16 billion is being given to building society members. It will be fed into the economy next year without the need for a dash for votes at the Budget. The Halifax, Woolwich, Alliance & Leicester and Northern Rock could be involved in the biggest switch of capital to equalise the UK's ever seen. In addition, Bristol & West is set to be taken over by the Bank of Ireland. If all the conversions go ahead, about 20 million people will become shareholders in the converted building societies. This figure is higher than the number of shareholders introduced to the stock market during more than a decade of popular capitalism.

In addition to these four society floats, Norwich Union is also anticipated to float before the end of next year. It could release shares worth £3 billion to £4 billion, benefiting three million policyholders.

If the four society floats follow the pattern of the Abbey National, about a quarter of the new shareholders will sell their shares in the first year, many will sell in just a few weeks, with a further 25 per cent selling out in the following four years. Even so, a £4 billion cash injection into the economy is the equivalent of 20 off the basic rate of income tax.

Rob Thomas, UBS building society analyst, believes that the society floats would almost certainly be inflationary. He said: "They could add up to 2 per cent on spending, which is around the £450 billion mark."

A report carried out by Harris Research on behalf of Nikko Europe analysed what effect the conversions could have on the economy. The research company questioned 2,000 people about what they planned to do with the payout. It found that those people who planned to spend their windfall were likely to choose to go on a holiday or travel, were interested in buying clothes or improving their homes.

The report predicted that about £500

million to £750 million extra would be added to the sales in this sector. The money could also be spent on domestic appliances, televisions and music centres. The jewellery and toy industries are also expected to get a modest boost.

Two societies, the Cheltenham & Gloucester and the National & Provincial, have already gone through the process of converting. The Cheltenham & Gloucester was taken over by Lloyds Bank last year, with members receiving a total of £1.8 billion.

Unlike the other four societies poised for conversion, the payout was made in

cash. According to Harris Research about two thirds of the money was saved, while one third was spent on, among other things, holidays and home improvements. However, the Cheltenham & Gloucester payout arrived when consumer confidence in the UK was still at a low ebb. The first real signs of recovery in the housing market had not begun to show, and many people were still concerned about losing their jobs. This time round many more people may be encouraged to spend.

The National & Provincial takeover

Hibernation time on the home front

From Mr K.A. Yeomans

Sir, it is surely not surprising that monthly mortgage lending is heading for "winter hibernation" (Setback to home loans recovery, *The Times*, October 29).

There is every indication of a future increase in the bank rate. Every 1 per cent will result in an additional annual repayment of £500 on a £50,000 mortgage. Even the prospect of a penny in the pound reduction in income tax — that yields £200 annually on £20,000 of taxable income — does not inspire confidence in the purchase of property. This is particularly so since investment in property is no longer perceived as a reliable hedge against inflation.

Yours faithfully,
K.A. YEOMANS,
300 Uppidge Road,
Rickmansworth,
Hertfordshire.

Small firms' success is essential to Britain's recovery

From Mrs Barbara Roche, MP for Hornsey and Wood Green (Labour)

Sir, Your business pages (November 4) report a survey showing that managers in small businesses lack key skills.

The report — from the Institute of Management — makes alarming reading. A majority of those surveyed considered that they lacked vital skills in strategy and planning, training and development, marketing

and sales and leadership. They are confused about where to find the training they need and the training courses they had experienced were too often targeted at large companies. The report concluded that the success of the small business sector is being threatened by this lack of skills.

Government ignores these findings at its peril, and at Britain's. Ensuring appropriate training is available is a

Audit Commission memo and the dropping of extortion cases

From Ms Melanie Raizon

Sir, As the solicitor involved at the time, may I come to the defence of Jason Nissé over his article "Dish-seeking officials escape prosecution" (October 14)?

The internal Audit Commission memo he obtained contradicted the claim, repeated in the commission letter criticising him (*The Times*, October 22), that extortion cases are dropped only for lack of evidence. The memo stated: "If what [the complainant] says is

true it looks as though" the officer was engaging in corruption. In short, the memo stated it should not be investigated because, even if true, it was not to be treated as criminal. The commission did not ask for the evidence, so Mr Vivers is inaccurate in implying corruption was not pur-

sued due to "lack of evidence in an individual case".

Your readers should be aware that if they fall victim to what Mr Nissé described as the commonest form of exacting bribes, and which Professor Zander says is criminal, their case will not come before the courts. Other officials will take their decision not to prosecute.

Yours faithfully,
MELANIE RAIZON,
14 Buckland Crescent, NW3.

Surprises from the Goldfish

From Mr Martin Rutland

Sir, I write in reply to Annabel Geddes's letter (Business Letters, November 1), in which she states that the Goldfish credit card might sink rather than swim because it was offered to someone who is not a British Gas customer.

I am happy to advise that Goldfish cardholders can also redeem the savings they make every time they spend with the card at any Asda store against groceries, petrol, clothing and a variety of other goods.

You'll continue to be surprised at what you can do with a Goldfish!

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN RUTLAND
(Communications Director),
Goldbrand Developments,
North Street,
Winkfield,
Windsor,
Berkshire.



ANTHONY HARRIS

Waiving the rules: the Irish miracle

John Major likes to claim that Britain has the strongest economy in Europe. Fair enough as a Charac-tease; but not true, and by a long way. For nine of the past ten years one country has easily headed the league on almost any test you could devise. The Irish Republic has the fastest growth, the highest investment, the strongest trade balance, and the fastest job creation in the EU. Now it can add the lowest inflation and the tightest budget — and, not surprisingly, the strongest currency in the exchange-rate mechanism.

Read figures, and swallow hard. GDP growth has averaged more than 7 per cent over the past three years. The visible trade surplus is nearly 20 per cent of GDP — despite a consumer boom and a construction boom. Perhaps the figures, especially for trade, need to be read a shade sceptically? Possible. A notoriously undisciplined border with Northern Ireland encourages mass smuggling from the Republic duties on drink, tobacco or fuel rise more than a little above UK rates. But no plausible correction would alter the big picture. This is an Irish miracle.

Simon Briscoe, Nikko Europe economist, said: "It is still unclear where this money has gone. Spending figures over the last month have been pretty erratic. An extra £100 million spent, which would only be a tenth of the £1 billion cash released in the takeover, would have been spent." Simon Briscoe, Nikko Europe economist, said: "It is still unclear where this money has gone. Spending figures over the last month have been pretty erratic. An extra £100 million spent, which would only be a tenth of the £1 billion cash released in the takeover, would have been spent."

The latest retail figures show that high street sales have risen steeply, at the fastest rate since the 1988 boom. Some of this extra spending will almost certainly be related to the cash released from the Abbey National after its takeover of National & Provincial. The general effects on spending of the floatations may be difficult to quantify, but one thing is certain — some of the biggest beneficiaries of the building society bonanza will be the highly paid teams of advisers taken on to get each of the societies to market. In its transfer document, issued last week, Alliance & Leicester revealed that the cost of conversion would hit the £83 million mark. The total bill for all four of the floatations could be as high as £400 million.

Among those to benefit will be the Post Office, and the Royal Mail. Halifax, for instance, will have to send out transfer documents and other relevant information to each of its nine million members. The total bill for its postage is expected to be between £10 million and £20 million.

Alliance & Leicester anticipates spending £8 million on mailing its 3.5 million members five times during the conversion process. The Royal Mail last year made profits of £354 million from dealing with 17.5 billion first and second class letters. One billion more letters will considerably boost its profits.

Meanwhile, the main stimulus which have made it all happen are not exactly Euro-neighbourly. Investment has been attracted by corporate taxes which are not just low, but an offence again the very idea of harmonisation; and total growth has been sustained by two almost stealthy devaluations, in 1986 and 1993.

Meanwhile, the main stimulus which have made it all happen are not exactly Euro-neighbourly. Investment has been attracted by corporate taxes which are not just low, but an offence again the very idea of harmonisation; and total growth has been sustained by two almost stealthy devaluations, in 1986 and 1993.

It would be more accurate just to call them the lucky people, and after centuries of the other kind, why not? More people might celebrate if they could take a stake in the new success story; but the Republic has one more oddity up its sleeve. The equity market is almost invisibly small. As in Germany, you can only really get in through the banks.

The teams of highly paid lawyers hired for the conversion process will also find 1997 a bumper year.

Linklaters & Paine, the City law firm, has nearly made a clean sweep of the honours, handling conversions for the Woolwich, Alliance & Leicester and Halifax. Its 162 partners who, according to the monthly magazine, *Legal Business*, bring average profits to the firm of £88,000 annually, can look forward to a cash bonanza.

Top lawyers often charge fees of £500 an hour — a third of which translates in to profits. Their fees will make a considerable dent in the total costs of conversion. The spoils on the merchant bank side are to be divided up between JP Morgan, the US bank, and Schroders.

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST - INVESTMENT IN SECURITY

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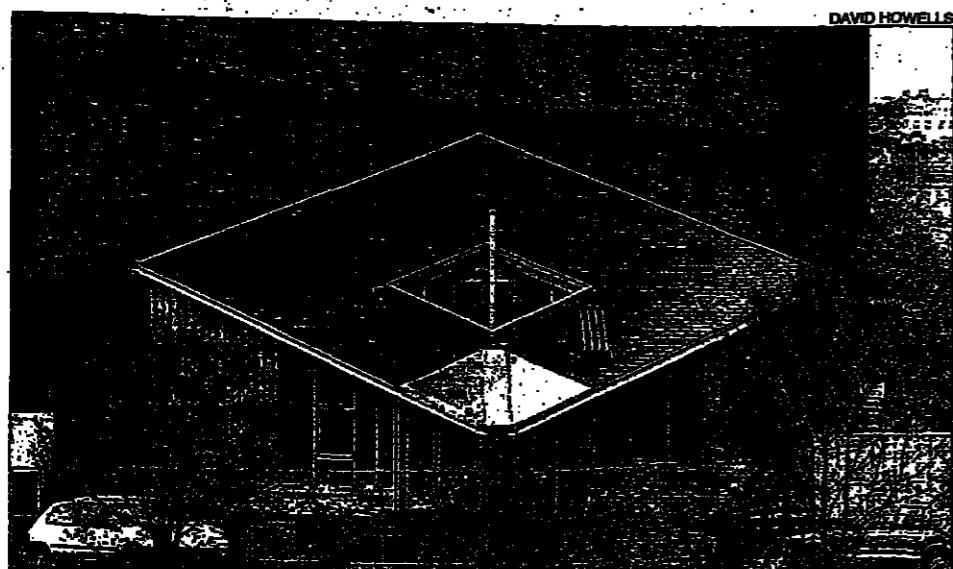
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Equities and gilts higher in thin trading

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1996	High	Low	Company	Price	Yield	PE
225	125	120	Alcohol Beverage	61	52	11
226	125	120	Albert Heijn	61	52	11
227	125	120	Alpha Stores	61	52	11
228	125	120	Alpha Stores A	61	52	11
229	125	120	Alpha Stores B	61	52	11
230	125	120	Alpha Stores C	61	52	11
231	125	120	Alpha Stores D	61	52	11
232	125	120	Alpha Stores E	61	52	11
233	125	120	Alpha Stores F	61	52	11
234	125	120	Alpha Stores G	61	52	11
235	125	120	Alpha Stores H	61	52	11
236	125	120	Alpha Stores I	61	52	11
237	125	120	Alpha Stores J	61	52	11
238	125	120	Alpha Stores K	61	52	11
239	125	120	Alpha Stores L	61	52	11
240	125	120	Alpha Stores M	61	52	11
241	125	120	Alpha Stores N	61	52	11
242	125	120	Alpha Stores O	61	52	11
243	125	120	Alpha Stores P	61	52	11
244	125	120	Alpha Stores Q	61	52	11
245	125	120	Alpha Stores R	61	52	11
246	125	120	Alpha Stores S	61	52	11
247	125	120	Alpha Stores T	61	52	11
248	125	120	Alpha Stores U	61	52	11
249	125	120	Alpha Stores V	61	52	11
250	125	120	Alpha Stores W	61	52	11
251	125	120	Alpha Stores X	61	52	11
252	125	120	Alpha Stores Y	61	52	11
253	125	120	Alpha Stores Z	61	52	11
254	125	120	Alpha Stores AA	61	52	11
255	125	120	Alpha Stores BB	61	52	11
256	125	120	Alpha Stores CC	61	52	11
257	125	120	Alpha Stores DD	61	52	11
258	125	120	Alpha Stores EE	61	52	11
259	125	120	Alpha Stores FF	61	52	11
260	125	120	Alpha Stores GG	61	52	11
261	125	120	Alpha Stores HH	61	52	11
262	125	120	Alpha Stores II	61	52	11
263	125	120	Alpha Stores JJ	61	52	11
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The £100,000, three-bedroom Ecohome on the banks of the Avon. Right, how it works

The best in the West?

Rachel Kelly on a model of energy-efficient design that costs only £65 a year to heat

It is the architects say, one of the most energy-efficient and environment-friendly houses to be built in the West. The £100,000 three-bedroom house in Cumberland Road, Bristol, will cost just £65 a year to heat, its hot water costs £48 a year and its appliances will cost a predicted £200 a year.

The house, commissioned by Bristol City Council, and designed by Richard Swann of the architects Bruges Tozer, in Bristol, has been built to inspire. Work began in January and the cube-shaped house was completed last month. It will open to the public early next year, initially as home to a caretaker who will demonstrate its features.

The design was chosen from 84 architectural schemes submitted to Bristol City Council. Penny Gane, group manager of health and environmental development, says: "It is a show home, rather than a prototype for other homes."

Built with council money and next door to the council's recycling and environmental

centre known as Create, the south-facing house is built of recycled Somerset bricks interspersed with narrow bands of new bricks.

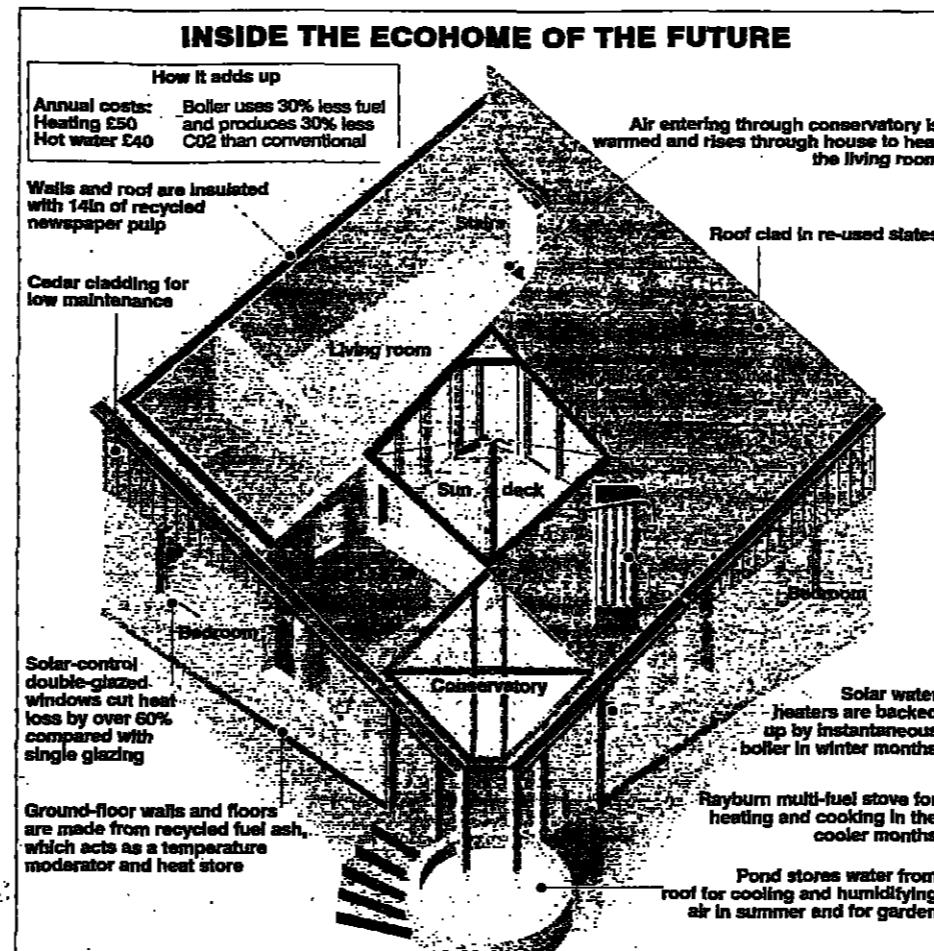
The upper walls are timber-framed and clad with renewable red cedar which requires no maintenance. The roof, of recycled slate, slopes steeply south to a conservatory. Glass walls on the south side

maximise light and heat.

Downstairs are two bedrooms, the caretaker's flat, a kitchen, dining room and bathroom. The ground-floor bedrooms are surrounded by blocks of fuel ash to keep in the heat. Conventional radiators provide heat in winter.

Upstairs is an L-shaped open-plan living room with a sun deck providing views of the River Avon. An exposed condensing boiler is fed with water preheated by solar roof panels. A small balcony will lead to a bridge that will be built to connect the house to Create's information centre.

Heat is drawn through the conservatory and funnelled to the living room and kitchen



bath to conserve water, flow restrictors on the cold taps and a low capacity cistern. Water from the sloping roof collects in a pond by the conservatory and is used to water the "macramé" garden: one with layers of ground cover and shrubs, which require no maintenance.

Electric cables and switches, and the drainpipes, feature the only plastic in the house. Even the furnishings are green. Builders have used natural mineral paint and the carpets are made of coconut fibre.

As technology advances, so will the house. Diane Bunyan, the council's chairwoman of health and environmental services, says: "We want to make Bristol a more sustainable city and we see this as an evolving project. We don't want to say this is the best ever house; you can never get it right. It's a subject for debate."

The problem, as Ms Gane admits, is the obstacles that await would-be green homeowners. There are excellent reasons to use solar power. The energy from the sun is clean and abundant; a new re-

port from Greenpeace says that the amount received in 30 minutes is the equivalent of the power used by the entire population of the Earth in a year.

There are two main ways of using solar energy: the more standard panels fitted to a British home will add 8.3 per cent to a total building cost of £120,000. Bulk purchasing could reduce the cost from about £11,000 to £8,000. That means that a unit of solar electricity will cost between four and ten times as much as a unit of conventional power. But over time it should become more competitive. If the utility companies paid more for electricity, it would transform the economics of such installations.

The Government and industry should see the sense in tipping the scales of the economy in favour of solar-powered environmental solutions." So the Ecohome uses solar panels instead. "Indeed," he adds, "one would use both types of panels."

There is little government encouragement to ease the cost of installing such photovoltaic panels, and the paucity of

solar electric equipment firms means that there are few economies of scale.

By contrast, in Germany there are subsidies of up to 70 per cent to help homeowners install photovoltaic panels.

Greenpeace estimates that the average solar electric system fitted to a British home will add 8.3 per cent to a total building cost of £120,000. Bulk purchasing could reduce the cost from about £11,000 to £8,000. That means that a unit of solar electricity will cost between four and ten times as much as a unit of conventional power. But over time it should become more competitive. If the utility companies paid more for electricity, it would transform the economics of such installations.

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• The Greenpeace report, Building Homes with Solar Power, can be obtained from Greenpeace (0171-865 8218).

Hartfield). The substantial fragment of a C16 brick manor. What remains is first of all the gatehouse with polygonal turrets to the outside, covered by ogee caps. Three-light brick windows. To the inside, buttress-shafts in

stretches of turrets. Bolebrook Castle itself, which stands on one side of the Gate House, was used by Henry VIII as a hunting lodge, and it is said that he based himself there while courting Anne Boleyn. Past owners include the Earls and Dukes of Dorset.

It is thought that the Gate House was built in 1500, but



Charm: the Gate House

some historians think the materials used came from an even older building. The bricks it is built of are unusually flat, long and thin, measuring about 10in by 5in.

The Gate House was extended in the 1970s to make it a more practical family home. This gives a 24ft drawing room, a study, three bedrooms, a bathroom and a large kitchen/breakfast room.

Doors lead to a splendid 19ft dining hall, with a 7ft turret room off it, used as a wine cellar, and french doors to the acre of garden.

• This Grade II listed gem is available through Pavilions of Splendour, London NW1 (081-831234) at £310,000. The flings may be available by negotiation.

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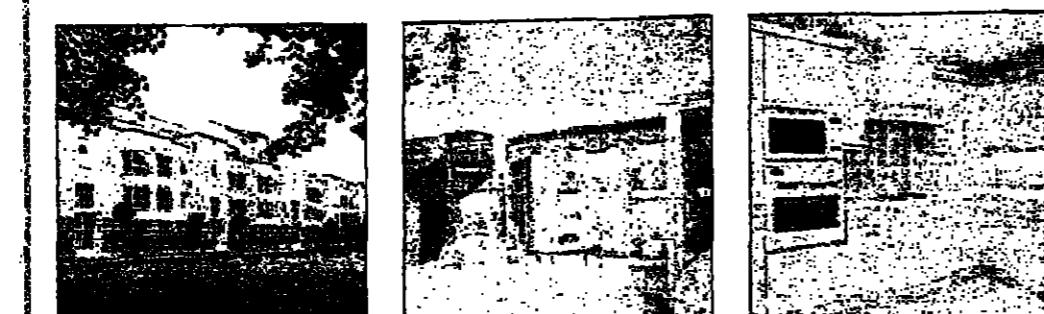
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■ POP 1

The MTV Awards: a welcome global party for the music industry, or just a slick piece of marketing?



■ POP 2

Junior Wells, now the senior statesman of the blues, shows his mettle at the Jazz Café

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ POP 3

At the Festival Hall, the great Youssou N'Dour generously shares the limelight with his protégé



■ RISING STAR

From pub singer to Messiah: Steve Balsamo prepares to play the lead in *Jesus Christ Superstar*

POP: David Sinclair on the real reasons for tomorrow's MTV Awards and other musical gong-fests; plus gig reviews

See the show, buy the album

Let hands be shook, champagne poured: yes, I've come for my award. So sang the *Beautiful South* a few years ago. And there will be plenty of chancers and glad-handing going on tomorrow night when the 1996 MTV Europe Awards, hosted by Robbie Williams, will be staged at Alexandra Palace in north London.

George Michael, Simply Red, the Fugees, Bryan Adams, Metallica, Kula Shaker, Boyzone, Peter Andre and Garbage will be among the acts performing before an invited audience of 4,500 music industry movers and shakers. But their real target will be the viewers in a potential 55 million European households who will be able to see the ceremony live on MTV, and the further hundreds of millions worldwide who will be able to tune in for the recorded version in the days following.

The old sporting adage that it is not so much the winning as the taking that counts could have been invented to describe the modern televised music awards show. As Ed Bicknell, manager of Mark Knopfler and Dire Straits, explains, they are more a shop window for the industry than a calibration of musical excellence or a means of promoting new talent. "It is basically a vehicle for selling records, and what television wants is big names and lots of glitz," he says. "In America, the Grammies are treated by the record companies in just the same way that the Oscars are treated by the film industry. An enormous amount of lobbying goes on to get acts nominated and to get acts performing at them. Once they do get on, people such as Madonna will make a huge effort to make their performance stand out."

With the Q Awards (televised last week on VH-1), the Music of Black Origin Awards (ITV, November 21) the *Smash Hits Poll Winners' Party* (live on BBC1, December 1) and the

Brits (ITV, February 29), the calendar is becoming crowded with such events. But is their significance becoming eroded as a result?

"The MTV awards are not the run-of-the-mill industry backslapping exercise that most of us are accustomed to going to," says Peter Einstein, business director of MTV Europe. "These awards really represent the views and tastes of young Europeans."

An enormous amount of lobbying goes on to get acts nominated

In which case, one inevitably wonders why there are not more acts of a specifically European (as opposed to Anglo-American) provenance involved. "That's simply the way the market is," says Brent Hansen, creative director of MTV Europe. "We have got [Italian singer] Eros Ramazzotti on stage, [German punk group] Die Toten Hosen are in there along with [Italian techno DJ] Robert Miles. But we can't start loading it with European acts just to score points. The winners are voted for by the viewers, and for the kid on the street in Istanbul or Jerusalem it's what is happening out there."

There is a deeply held, if rather old-fashioned, view that MTV itself has played no small part in reinforcing the dominance of American popular culture abroad. But as Charlie Gillett, director of Oval Records and respected radio broad-

caster, points out, the reverse may be true. "I've been dismayed by the role MTV seems to have had in standardising music into different categories in America," Gillett says. "But I think it has had a different effect in Europe. German, Danish and Swedish acts, particularly dance acts such as Ace of Base, have surfaced through MTV Europe, and not all of them are bad. Ace of Base's first record was great."

A more difficult charge to answer

is that awards shows have played a significant part in delivering rock'n'roll, once the sound of youthful rebellion, into the arms of the dreaded establishment. There were far more politicians and peers than pop stars in attendance at last week's launch party for the MTV awards, held at the National Portrait Gallery. The keynote speech was delivered by Virginia Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary, who is becoming something of a regular at these affairs.

According to the Labour MP Austin Mitchell, his fellow parliamentarians were there for "the free booze, the free food and because it was at the National Gallery. But it's also because they want to talk to a different crowd, which they can't do elsewhere."

However, this kind of thing does not go down well among the more diehard firebrands in the pop industry. "I think MTV is as out of touch as the old Radio 1 was," says Alan McGee, president of semi-independent Creation Records and mentor of Oasis, who are shortlisted in three categories of tomorrow's awards. "MTV doesn't do anything for new bands on independent labels. It's the most establishment format imaginable, summed up by the fact that Virginia Bottomley was the hostess with the mostest at the pre-awards drink-up."

• The 1996 MTV Europe Music Awards will be broadcast live tomorrow (6pm) on MTV and on Saturday by ITV (10.55pm)



Robbie Williams, host of the MTV award ceremony, gets cosy with model Carla Bruni at last year's bash

Senior service

IT IS more than 40 years since a brash and talented harmonica player and singer called Junior Wells made his mark on a Chicago blues scene dominated by the likes of Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and Elmore James. There is still a touch of that brashness and, happily, no diminution of that talent now that 61-year-old Wells has himself become

Junior Wells

Jazz Café, NW1

an elder statesman of the blues. But Wells has moved with the times. His new and largely acoustic album on Telarc, *Come on in this House*, may mark a return to his Memphis blues roots, but this evening was strictly big band blues, with an eight-piece band, including a three-piece brass section, setting up funky rhythms which had more in common with James Brown than Little Walter. As a result, it was Wells the vocalist who dominated proceedings.

His vocal talents have survived the years almost intact, even if the lyrics of his theme tune, *Messin' with the Kid*, don't exactly fit the bill nowadays. When he did get around to playing the harmonica, the solos were short and sharp (verging on the discordant at times) but effective.

It would have been a joy to see Wells playing with some of the guests on his new album — slide guitarist Sonny Landreth, acoustic newcomer Corey Harris or all-round bluesman Bob Margolin. Instead we were given lounge club blues — *Little Red Rooster*, *I Got My Mojo Working* and *Hoodoo Man* — and the capacity crowd lapped it up.

JOHN CLARKE

THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES

First rays of a new African star

Youssou N'Dour

Festival Hall

SUPPORT acts who steal the show are not usually very popular with headlining stars. On this rare occasion Youssou N'Dour, probably the biggest name in African music, could not have been more thrilled that his protégé, the remarkable Cheikh Lo, walked away with the plaudits. That was exactly how he had planned it.

Most of the audience had come to hear Youssou's pop-oriented hits such as *Seven Seconds*, but he thrust the spotlight on the slender, dreadlocked figure of Lo. Nobody was disappointed, for what we witnessed was the British debut of a rare talent destined to become one of world music's biggest stars.

N'Dour planned the concert in the style of an old Motown review, with a dozen musicians, mostly drawn from his Super Etoile band, who wander on and off stage, playing in different combinations. He sang back-up, engaged in some thrilling call and response vocals, and danced while Lo captivated us for an hour and a half.

Traditional rhythms combined with swaying Latin moods characterise Lo's

music. There is also a strong spiritual quality; he is a follower of the Mourides, a laid-back Islamic sect which appears to have more in common with Rastafarianism than the turbulent mulahs of the Middle East. The result is warm and lyrical, relaxed yet passionate, based on simple lilting rhythms that gradually build into complex and mesmerising patterns.

Only in the final half hour did N'Dour take centre stage. In his early years he would produce two versions of his albums, a full African sound and then a lighter, pop-tinted European cut. Two weeks ago he performed in straight pop vein to an ecstatic but almost totally white crowd in Johan-

neshburg. A far blacker London audience got the authentic African version, a sweaty, downtown Dakar nightclub recreated on a cold and blustery South Bank evening. There was no place for *Seven Seconds*, no pandering to pop sensibilities, just raw Senegalese passion as his voice swooped and soared using the traditional techniques of *tasso* (an early kind of rap) and *bakou* (a trilling *chaï*). It was as fine an evening as London's African music fans have heard all year — and when Lo's final appearance drew the biggest cheer of the night no one was prouder than N'Dour.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

They may be Sweden's most successful pop export since Abba, but the clean-cut quartet known as the Cardigans often seemed to be pulling in different directions at their Bristol University show. While singer Nina Persson's helium voice soared skyward, musical kingpin Peter Svensson indulged his passion for loudly crashing heavy metal guitar, and keyboard player Lars Johansson topped everything off with kitsch easy-listening flourishes.

It's an unlikely but winning formula, especially with Svensson's highly catchy melodies yoking the whole attractive package together. Shamelessly flirting with bossa nova and 1970s disco, these stylish young Swedes deal in a refined brand of knowing nostalgia far removed from the classic rock pantheon currently being pillaged by Britpop.

At their best, the Cardigans marry the giddy playground rush of superior Europop to sour and highly adult sentiments. This dark undertow was much more apparent during tracks from their recently released third album, *First Band on the Moon*, than on the breezier tunes from its million-selling predecessor, *Life*. Whereas older numbers such as *Carnival or Rise and Shine* simply whirled like brightly coloured spinning tops, the more recent songs invariably packed a sting behind their cheery demeanour.

Sometimes the musical arrangements suited Persson's

The Cardigans

Bristol

lyrical tone perfectly, as in *Been It or Step on Me*, whose themes of emotional slavery and abuse were reinforced by a dissonant and slightly queasy delivery. At other times these two elements were purposefully mismatched, with jarringly galloping such as *Never Recover* masking fraught tales of loveless woe. Nina's penchant for concluding each song with a bittersweet narrative with bursts of derisive laughter only added to the jarring, manic depressive effect.

Sadly, this habit also increased the sense of chilly aloofness which the Cardigans often bring to their live shows. Coming across as neither warm nor willing entertainers, they made little effort to involve the audience in their private dramas and only exchanged blandly minimal pleasantries. Most of the group speak perfect English, so the problem is clearly not one of language, but of temperament.

Still, they topped off their set with *Great Divide*, a beautiful elegy to a ruined love affair that showed they are capable of sincere sentiment amid all the arch musical allusions and impermeable Nordic poise.

STEPHEN DALTON

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

STEVE BALSAMO

Profession: Singer and actor

Age: 25

Superstar material? Literally. He is playing the title role in the revival of Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Lyceum from Tuesday.

Unconventional route to the West End: "After dropping out of an art degree at Swansea Institute, I worked for a piano removal firm and at the Port Talbot steelworks in between spells on the dole." He then enrolled on a performing arts course at Neath Tertiary College and within a few months had landed a part in a touring production of *Les Misérables*.

When and why did he start singing? "At 18, I had a girlfriend who was obsessed with rock singers Jon Bon Jovi in particular." In a fit of jealousy, he joined a band and started belting out Alice Cooper cover versions in Swansea pubs.

What set him apart at May's auditions? The show's director, Gale Edwards, was won over by Balsamo's "natural charisma" and "astonishingly good rock'n'roll voice".

Lucky break: He had stayed on the Neath performance course just long enough to appear in one production — playing Christ in *Superstar*. "So I was totally at home with Jesus's main song, *Gethsemane*, at the auditions."

How does it feel to play Christ? "Very exciting, but quite a big responsibility. I'm very conscious that some Christians feel short-changed that the show ends at the Crucifixion." Other main string to his bow: He has written hundreds of songs and is lead singer with a three-piece band, Living Room. "Think Seal with flavours of the Eagles".

DANIEL ROSENTHAL



■ JAZZ

The saxophone colossus comes to town: Sonny Rollins mixes humility with perfectionism



■ DANCE

The Paris Opera Ballet makes its first excursion into the work of Frederick Ashton

THE TIMES ARTS



■ MUSIC

Magnificent Mahler: the BBC Symphony Orchestra rises to the Sixth Symphony



■ OFFER

Special prices for Griff Rhys Jones in *Plunder* at the Savoy: see Theatre Club for details

A humble giant, Sonny side up

ALLAN ITTMUSS

JAZZ: Clive Davis on why Sonny Rollins can't bear to hear his own music

If there is one Sonny Rollins album title that everybody knows, it must be *Saxophone Colossus*, that granite landmark of Fifties jazz. Four decades on, as he opens the door of his apartment, Rollins still cuts an imposing figure: there is a weightiness to his frame, and his trim beard, snow-white now, gives him the austere look of a tenor-playing Captain Ahab.

In jazz circles Rollins remains a giant, one of the last active survivors of the generation who drew up the postwar rules. When he arrives at the Barbican for the closing weekend of the Oris London Jazz Festival, his audience can expect another masterclass in the art of extended improvisation.

A face-to-face encounter reveals another, more vulnerable facet of his personality. A quintessential perfectionist, he discusses his own work with a humility rarely encountered in these days of PR bluster and image consultants.

Theodore Walter Rollins knows the measure of his own contribution but still senses a duty to haul himself one step higher. Plenty of musicians, for instance, prefer not to hear their own recordings. Even so, Rollins's sense of distaste for his own albums goes well beyond the norm. Little wonder that he makes his wife and manager, Lucille, do most of the listening for him. "I sometimes have to listen during the editing stage of a recording," he says. "And I think, 'Wow, why did I play that here?' or 'I wish my tone was better there.' It becomes an excruciating experience. And it's a drag, because I think I could be informed by hearing what I have played."

The cover of *Silver City*, the newly released 25-year, two-CD retrospective of his tenure with the Milestone label, symbolises the contrast between his public and

6 The age

I'm at now,

I want to

play

more ♪



Still bestride the world: Sonny Rollins, restless perfectionist, master of improvisation, and one of the last active survivors of the generation who drew up the postwar rules

private persons. On the front we see his imperial profile engraved on a coin or medallion: a Caesar for the Nineties. On the back of the sleeve, above the list of contents, stands a single, almost plaintive line: "I hope these selections from the body of my recordings meet with the approval of my loyal fans."

The point, as Rollins knows only too well, is that the loyal fans — especially those who have been following him since the early days on Prestige — have been prone to a certain restlessness of late. The 19 tunes on *Silver City*, ranging from the funky exuberance of *G-Man* to the swirling balladry of *I'm Old Fashioned*, maintain an enviable standard. But, taken as a whole, the albums of the past 20 years or so have been a mixed bunch.

His live appearances have prompted similar misgivings. Catch him on the right evening, and he can deliver two hours of unforgettable spontaneity and music-making. But Rollins is

not immune to the laws of gravity, and when his performances do not rise to the occasion, the metronomic drum beat and the self-effacing solos of his sidemen, including his nephew Clinton Anderson on trumpet, make an uninspired combination.

One other complaint is that, in common with other players of his stature, he no longer performs in clubs. Concert halls, after all, cannot begin to match the ambience of a room where the players can feed off the energy and enthusiasm of an audience huddled around tables. Rollins understands the logic behind the grievance, but given his dislike of travelling, one-timers allow him to reach more people.

His links with his native New York and its musical trends have grown more tenuous since the period, nearly 40 years ago, when

he could be found practising, night after night, on the Williamsburg Bridge above the East River. Though he keeps his spartan studio apartment in the bustle of the now-fashionable Tribeca district, his home is in tranquil upstate New York, not far from Woodstock.

On average, he ventures out for 40 or 45 concerts a year, a reasonable amount for a man his

age. Yet as he nears his eighth decade he finds the urge to perform is growing stronger rather than waning.

"Playing the number of dates I do has been great, because it has allowed me to be really charged up when I do go out. But the age I'm at now, I want to play more. There are so many things I want to do, and I know that I'm not a kid who thinks

he's going to be around forever."

There may be a radical new development in his music too. While *+3*, the album he released earlier this year, marked a welcome return to a more robust trio format (with Tommy Flanagan and the much younger Stephen Scott sharing the piano duties), Rollins talks about edging towards a more "elemental" form.

This, remember, is the musician who has teased all manner of subtleties out of calypso tunes — a reflection of his family's Caribbean roots. His new ideas appear to point in a similar direction: "It's hard to explain what I'm looking for because it hasn't crystallised yet in my mind. But it's about looking backwards to something more primitive ... more aboriginal. The

sound has come to me a couple of times when I've been playing, and I've been working on it ever since."

The concept, however vague, sounds fascinating, I tell him. He gives a self-deprecating grunt.

"Yes. But now I've got to go and do it." Sonny Rollins is reaching for the next rung on the ladder.

• Sonny Rollins appears at the Barbican on Friday at 7.30pm

French for Freddy



THE Paris Opera Ballet has danced a huge range of works, but its current performances of *Rhapsody* represent its first experience of Frederick Ashton. It comes as quite a shock to see France's dance heroes in such an alien style and it must have been an even greater shock to the heroes themselves. Never before had they been clothed in such a profusion of filigree movement and intricate spatial patterning.

Rhapsody is a warm work, not only in the central role created in 1980 around Mikhail Baryshnikov's divine prowess, but also in the other roles, positioned to reflect that virtuosity. The French male corps de ballet show a wonderful togetherness, clean shaping and forthright dynamics that keeps them right on top of Rachmaninov's headlong rhythms (played with verve under Alexander Polianichko).

Manuel Legris has the stylish strength and poise for the glittering cascade of killer steps and 'earsome' on-the-spot jets. He is the best since

delicately adjusted angles of the shoulders which give each movement its final touch of colour. Even Delphine Moussin, more alluringly resonant as the ballerina than Carole Arbo at the other performance I saw, lacked this fluency and the gentle deftness of脚 Ashton requires.

The programme opened with the *Défilé*, the sumptuous display of the company's hierarchy, and Serge Lifar's neoclassical *Satie en blanc*, both part of the Paris tradition.

Agnes de Mille's Fall River Legend, however,

was another company première. Beautifully performed by the whole cast, it became outstanding with Elisabeth Maurin as the darkly troubled anti-heroine. She moulded each gesture with such telling directness and tensed every fibre of her being into a psychological portrait of such multi-layered truth that the auditorium seemed to disappear and we felt sucked into the drama.

Ashton's famed exhortation, "bend, bend", needed repeating to the French women, to loosen their torsos for those

NADINE MEISNER

Paris Opera Ballet
Palais Garnier

Baryshnikov: better able to stay above water than any of the Royal Ballet men. He also possesses an intelligence that draws out the mysterious romance with the ballerina.

Ashton's famed exhortation, "bend, bend", needed repeating to the French women, to loosen their torsos for those

CONCERTS: The SCO lets rip in Edinburgh; the BBC Symphony Orchestra excels in Mahler

The big boss sound

in the Andante, toyed with in a teasingly slow trio section in the third movement, and pushed along at such a pace in the finale that it might easily have stumbled and collapsed.

It is an indication of the skill of the SCO that, while giving its all in sound and energy, it scarcely faltered in ensemble.

Although he is an American citizen, Swensen is Nordic by inclination. He lives in Copenhagen, is chief guest conductor of both the Stockholm Chamber and the Lahti Symphony Orchestras, and has obvious affinities with the Scandinavian scores ever heard.

From the aggressive opening bars onwards there was no relaxation of the pressure. Having got the bit between his teeth, Swensen was not going to let it go until it had been thoroughly shaken by hard-driven rhythms, subjected to extremes of dynamic contrast

vian repertoire. In this concert he not only gave an affectionate account of Sibelius's naively exotic incidental music for Prokofiev's *Belsazar's Feast* in 1905 but also conducted the first British performance of a long-lost piece for strings written by the same composer two years later.

The *Countess's Portrait* proved to be a beautifully written little elegy unmissably by Sibelius in spite of its minimalist structural ambition.

It is so short, in fact, that a second hearing would have been both welcome and instructive: a concert lasting barely 90 minutes and thin in substance — even though it did include an appealing performance of Haydn's Sinfonia Concertante in B flat as a centrepiece — had more than enough room for it.

GERALD LARNER

Noble despair

MAHLER may have suppressed the title "Tragic" from his Sixth Symphony, but there is no work of his to which it is more suited. It is the only one of his symphonies to end in the minor, and in bleak despair. The three hammer blows of the finale seem to foretell the composer at this time his enforced resignation from the Vienna Opera, the death of his four-year-old daughter, and the diagnosis of his own fatal heart disease.

One might expect a faithful performance of the symphony to be a depressing affair. But as Jiri Belohlávek's account with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Festival Hall showed, the experience can be exhilarating and, paradoxically, uplifting too.

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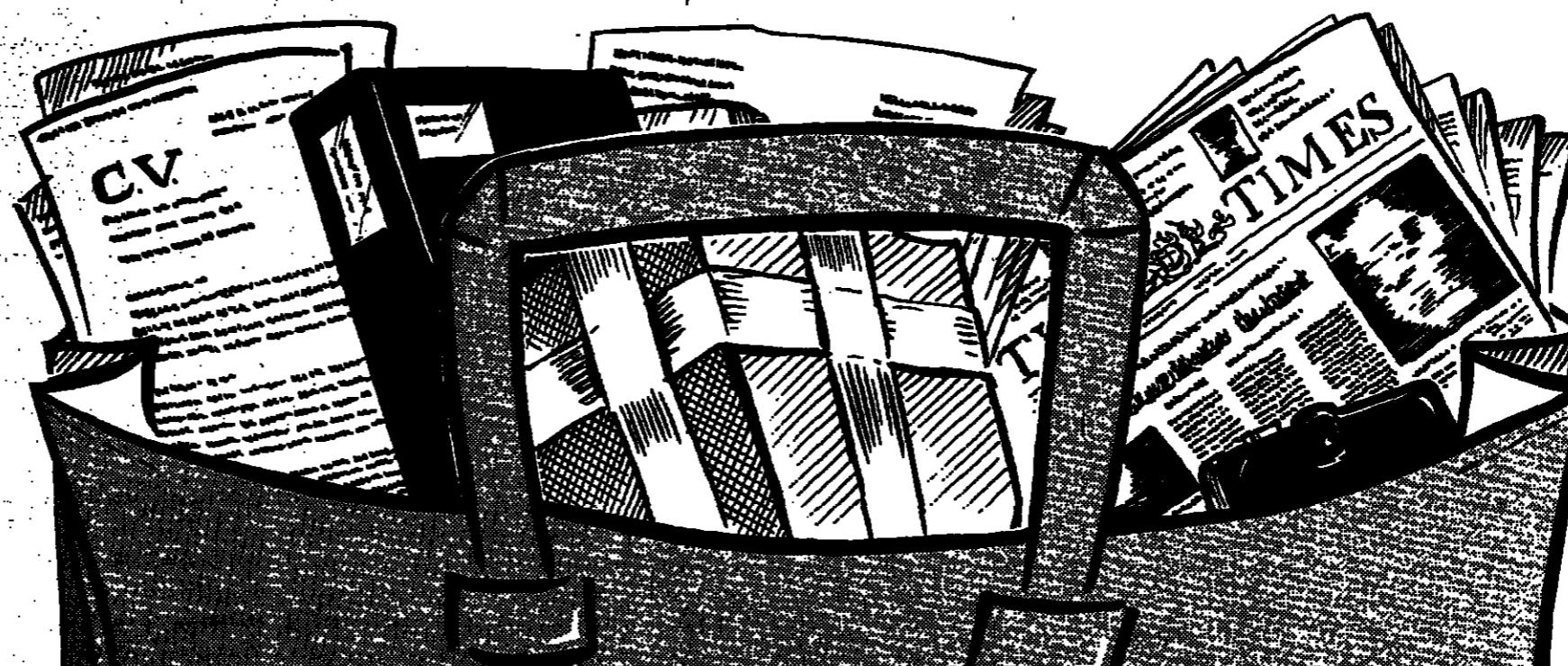
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Headley likely to be rested by England

FROM A CORRESPONDENT
IN MOUNT GAMBIER,
AUSTRALIA

DEAN HEADLEY, looking every inch the international-class strike bowler needed by England, is likely to be rewarded for his match-winning performance for the A team against South Australia by being rested for the four-day match against a much-harried Academy XI here later this week.

Having earned immediate respect from Australian media and cricketers alike by their 12-run victory over the Sheffield Shield holders in Adelaide on Monday, England are expected to rest their leading bowler against an Academy side regarded as "weak" by Rod Marsh, the coach.

It is no reflection on Headley's ability, more a concern about overworking a player who is almost certain to be called up during the Ashes series next summer should he continue to impress.

Headley, the Kent fast bowler, achieved a career-best match return of 11 for 98 in Adelaidian's fifth time in as many first-class matches for England A that he has captured at least five wickets in an innings — but suffered a hip injury on his return from the A tour to Pakistan last year and missed the early part of the summer.

The setback probably cost him a Test debut and mirrored a similar set of circumstances which befell Glen Chapple on his return from an impressive tour of India with the A team two years ago.

Headley is unlikely to agree with the management's concern over his welfare. A desire to succeed has been instilled upon him since he became a professional.

Although Headley does not have a classical action, his work with Darryl Foster, the Kent coach, has helped him to produce impressive results, with 45 wickets at 27.44 in ten championship matches last season.

His father, Ron, and grandfather, George, played for West Indies.

Leading lights, from Bradman to Border

John Woodcock concludes the series with an assessment of cricketers who are ahead of the field



THE GREAT CAPTAINS

Of the 108 cricketers I have watched captaining their countries at Test level from G. O. Allen and the Maharaj Kumar of Vizianagram at Lord's in 1936 to Michael Atherton and Wasim Akram at the Oval in 1996, very few have had the vision or the instinct or the standing, or some permutation of the three, to make a side more than the sum of its parts. And behind even the best have stood the bowlers to bring results.

Some of the game's most successful captains have needed to be little more than functionaries. Given the attack that was at the disposal first of Clive Lloyd and then of Vivian Richards, a duffer could have led West Indies to a succession of overwhelming victories in the 1980s, provided he was not allergic to the sight of blood. As captain of West Indies in Australia in 1975-76, before the Caribbean had been scoured for fast bowlers, and of Lancashire from 1981 to 1983, Lloyd was ineffectual. It was with a bat in his hand and as a catalyst, rather than as a tactician, that he excelled.

Sir Garfield Sobers, the most versatile cricketer the world has seen, won only two of his last 27 matches as captain of West Indies, such was his concern for the winner of the 2.30 at Ascot or the reason for his slice off the tee at Sandy Lane. Denis Compton, another wonderful cricketer, also lacked the bent to make a captain. Many of the best players do, and always have.

On the other hand, Sir Donald Bradman, Sir Leonard Hutton, Sir Frank Worrell, Richie Benaud, Raymond Illingworth and Mike Brearley all have the reputation for not missing a trick. The odd man out



Brearley, one of the best England captains, leaves the field after the extraordinary Headingly Test of 1981

among this sextet is Brearley, because he was nothing like as good a cricketer as the others. In 60 Test innings, most of them batting high in the order, he never made a hundred. It was said of him, though, that he had a degree in people (as well as a first at Cambridge), and the way in which he turned round England's fortunes against Australia in 1981, when he came back and took over the

rains from a hopelessly overburdened Ian Botham, has no parallel.

The pity is that he never pitted his wits against West Indies, either at home or away.

Bradman, of course, started with the enormous advantage of being as likely as not to win every match off his own bat. In O'Reilly and Grimmett, and then Lindwall and Miller, he also had in his side the



Worrell was a messianic figure, Imran a unifying force, Chappell a legendary hard man

great match-winning bowlers of their day. Hutton and Illingworth were calculating Yorkshiremen who specialised in giving nothing away, which is a skill in itself, albeit a somewhat oppressive one. Benard was rather the same — an expert in psychological warfare with an immensely shrewd cricket brain. As the first regular black captain of West Indies, Worrell was a Messiah in

particular, a symbol of defiance and when his enthusiasm for the fray might have started to wane, along came Shane Warne, the answer to every captain's prayer. There lies the crux. In the overwhelming majority of cases a captain is as good as his side, especially his bowlers.

John Ward said of playing for Middlesex under R. W. V. Robins that at the end of an unrewarding day in the field you always had the consolation of knowing that everything had been tried to bring down the opposition — short of sledging that is. That, to me, is much nearer the true art of captaincy than the prosecution of blanket attrition or wanton intimidation, however successful these may be.

Donald on bonus to reach three figures

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

WARWICKSHIRE have offered Allan Donald a substantial cash prize as an encouragement for him to try to reach 100 wickets next season. "We have built incentives into his contract which cut in at 70 wickets," Dennis Amis, the county's chief executive, said yesterday.

The South African fast bowler, who is returning as the county's overseas player in succession to Shaun Pollock, took 89 first-class wickets for the county in 1995 despite missing three games through injury.

Yesterday, Donald teamed up with Lance Klusener to demolish Karnataka, the Ranji Trophy champions, for the second time as the South Africans won the three-day match in Cochin by 244 runs. Karnataka, set 362, were bundled out for 117 in 205 minutes. Donald's return of three for 29 gave him seven wickets in the match, one less than Klusener.

Saeed Anwar scored his second unbeaten century in the Singer Champions Trophy in Sharjah as Pakistan swept aside Sri Lanka by eight wickets to book a place in the final of the three-nation competition.

Anwar, who struck 112 from 125 balls, and his fellow left-handed opener, Aamir Sohail, who scored 65 from 126 balls, put on 71 for the first wicket in 39.1 overs as Pakistan made light work of scoring the 190 needed to overhaul the holders of the World Cup.

Jimmy Adams (67) and the wicketkeeper, Courtney Browne (50), put on 98 for the sixth wicket to repair a poor start by the West Indians against a Northern Territory Invitation XI at Alice Springs. Brian Lara was dismissed for 27 by Mark Hatton, the Tasmania spinner, as the touring side made 218 for eight from their 50 overs and then dismissed the Invitation XI for 170 in 42.5 overs. The West Australia wicketkeeper, Adam Gilchrist, who led the Invitation XI, improved his chances of winning a Test place with an unbeaten 64.

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RUGBY UNION

Wood charges into contention for immediate recall

Ireland A 28
South Africa A 25

FROM DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT
IN DUBLIN

FOUR hours before Ireland's first international of the season, Keith Wood reminded the selectors that his form for Harlequins this season has been no flash in the pan. The hooker led Ireland to victory in the A international against South Africa at Donnybrook to boost his claim to a place in the senior XV against Australia on November 23.

A season recovering from injury has clearly left Wood champing at the bit; he resembles a man who perceives a place in South Africa with the British Isles next summer to be his right.

One magnificent thrusting

run immediately after the interval should have laid on a try for Niall Woods, but so great was the hooker's pace that McCall, a centre, was unable to take and give the scoring pass. Wood pulled several defenders to him that he should have created more space for his backs but, in a shapeless second half, Ireland almost allowed the game to drift away from them.

This has not been an easy tour for the South Africans.

After comparatively comfortable wins over Cambridge University and Bedford, they lost to Scotland A at Hawick last Friday and could not pluck this brand from the fire after conceding a 28-10 lead.

They relied heavily on a composed performance at stand-off half by Louis Koen, 21, who has taken over from Joel Stransky, South Africa's World Cup hero, in the West-

ern Province side. But they could not overcome their tendency to lose possession and only late in the game did they achieve parity at the lineout. Their potential is self-evident - they scored a wonderful first-half try from deep in their own 22, Erasmus surging from a scrum and du Toit making the vital run before Linee came through and Koen finished. But their play lacks consistency and discipline.

Elwood, one of seven full internationals in the Ireland team, opened their account with his first penalty before O'Shea - one of five English-based players - scored the first of his two tries. It remains to be seen whether the Irish Rugby Football Union's plan to spend £3 million next season on contracts for around 100 players in an effort to keep them based at home will bear fruit or whether they must hope that emerging players such as Brian O'Meara, 20, the scrum half, will repay them. O'Meara, from Cork, is one of four talented youngsters outside the national squad to have been offered a contract by the union.

With the wind at their backs the Irish pressed constantly and, when the hard-working Miller crossed after a tapped penalty, they turned round leading 21-10. Miller, the Leicester flanker, also provided the delightful long pass that allowed Walsh to scamper clear and send in O'Shea, but then the South Africans gained the initiative.

Scholtz, who probably rates as third-choice scrum half for Western Province, completed the surging drives of Coetzee and Krige and, when Linee picked up a poor pass from Elwood, du Toit was able to run clear from 60 metres. But their frantic efforts to score once more founded on a stern referee and an even sterner Irish defence.

SCORERS: Ireland A: Tries O'Shea (2), Miller (Conversion); Tries: Cawthron, B. Miller (2), O'Shea (2), Walsh (2). Penalties: O'Shea (2), Miller (2). South Africa: Tries: Elwood (2), Koen (2), Linee (2), Miller (2). Penalties: Koen (2).

IRELAND A: D. H. (Cavanagh), G. O'Shea (London Irish), B. Walsh (Cork Constitution), M. Miller (Leicester), N. Linee (Lions), J. O'Sullivan (Lions), D. Cawthron (Ulster), B. McElroy (Batemans), M. Finlay (Wandsworth), N. Taylor (Galwegians), S. Murphy (Lions), P. Healy (Ulster), C. O'Farrell (Bective Rangers), B. Mulcahy (Shamrock), B. Keay (London), B. Gavin (Galwegians), captain, B. Gavin (Galwegians).

SOUTH AFRICA A: D. du Toit (Northern Transvaal), J. van der Watt (Transvaal), T. Linee (Western Province), E. Lubbe (Griekwaat), S. Koen (Cheetahs), J. Miller (Lions), N. Keppler (Natal), N. Drotar (Free State), captain, B. Meyer (Eastern Province), D. Miller (Lions), B. Elwod (Lions), R. Opperman (Free State), R. Erasmus (Free State), L. Koen (Cheetahs), C. O'Keeffe (Western Province), R. Emeritus (Free State), captain, B. Miller (Lions), replaced by M. Gleeson (Soland), B.

Referee: C. Muir (Scotland)

Connacht prepare warm welcome

FROM KARL JOHNSTON IN DUBLIN

CONNACHT gave a good account of themselves when the Australians last visited Galway just over four years ago. In appalling weather conditions, they held the touring side to just one try and a 14-6 margin of defeat.

So well were they doing, in fact, that a local reporter was moved to remark aloud, when Anthony Herbert had to be replaced after 35 minutes: "The Aussies are worried, they're bringing on the great David Campese."

Campese, who appeared a reluctant replacement that day, will be back in action at the Sports Ground this afternoon, no doubt hoping for better weather than the icy Atlantic deluge that he experienced the last time around. The only other survivor from that 1992 Australian side is Richard Tombs, in the centre, while, of the Connacht team, only Eric Elwood, at stand-off half, and Billy Mullaney, the hooker, play again.

Connacht have not had a bad season under the guidance of Warren Gatland, their coach and a former New Zealand prop forward. Despite having to rely on players not snapped up by the other provinces, they have won a couple of warm-up matches, defeated Leinster and should have beaten Ulster in the Guinness inter-provincial championship. They also won their European Conference

games against Padova and Orrell.

Today, the team features five "home-grown" players, including Elwood, who played for Galwegians before switching to Lansdowne, in Dublin. This is an unusually high number and should help to maintain team spirit.

Elwood's only fellow international in the team is Nicky Barry, the centre capped as a replacement against Namibia in 1991 and a player who never fulfilled his great promise as a richly-talented schoolboy. Elwood will obviously be a key figure, but the strain of playing two matches in as many days could take its toll.

Shane Leahy and Graham Heaslip, in the second row, and Barry Gavin, at No 8, could enhance their growing reputations this afternoon. Of course, the Australians will be firm favourites, but Campese and Tombs will not have forgotten the western fire and fervour that they experienced four years ago.

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titles four years ago.

CONNACHT: B. Campese (Blackrock College), M. Keelan (Lansdowne), A. Redden (Lansdowne), N. Barry (Cork), N. Carolan (Galwegians), P. Healy (Ulster), C. Gleeson (Galwegians), P. Healy (Ulster), D. Cawthron (Ulster), B. Mulcahy (Shamrock), M. Finlay (Wandsworth), N. Taylor (Galwegians), S. Murphy (Lions), P. Healy (Ulster), C. O'Farrell (Bective Rangers), B. Gavin (Galwegians), captain, B. Gavin (Galwegians).

AUSTRALIA XV: T. Wallace (New South Wales), B. Ture (Queensland), A. Mandorff (Victoria), N. Herbert (Queensland), C. Campese (New South Wales), D. Campese (Victoria), B. Mullaney (Shamrock), R. Tombs (Australia Capital Territory), G. Grehan (ACT), C. Blakely (NSW), N. Taylor (ACT), P. Healy (Ulster), T. Linee (Western Province), B. Miller (Ulster), B. Robertson (ACT), G. Flanagan (ACT).

Referee: C. Muir (Scotland)

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SEE PAGE 2 FOR TODAY'S EUROSTAR TOKEN

CHANGING TIMES

FOR THE RECORD

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NFL): San Diego 27

Detroit 21

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Denver

104; Toronto 92; Chicago 57; Phoenix 79;

Seattle 110; Sacramento 84; Postponed;

Utah v San Antonio

CRICKET

Singer Champions' Trophy

Sri Lanka v Pakistan

SHARJAH (Sri Lanka won 105); Pakistan

beat Sri Lanka by eight wickets

SRI LANKA v Men's Under-19s

TR v Sri Lanka (not out)

M. Alauddin won out

SRI LANKA v Women v West Indies

J. P. Taiton beat Sri Lanka

A. Ranatunga v West Indies

W. F. U. J. C. Vass v Sri Lanka

SRI LANKA v Men's Under-19s

U. Chandrasekara v Men's Under-19s

S. C. de Silva v Arunachalam

U. Chandrasekara v West Indies

Estes (10 wts, 11 n.o.)

Total (50 overs)

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-2, 2-23, 3-30, 4-103,

5-122, 6-132, 7-166, 8-166, 9-182,

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RACING: TOP RIDER MISSES HENNESSY TO PARTNER FORMER CHAMPION HURDLER AT NEWCASTLE

Dunwoody committed to Alderbrook

BY JULIAN MUSCAT

WITHOUT a victory in the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup, Richard Dunwoody must wait at least 12 months before ending his personal drought in the Newbury showpiece.

Dunwoody will be at Newcastle to partner Alderbrook when the Hennessy is renewed on November 30. He is bound by a prior arrangement with the connections of Alderbrook, who embarks on his final jumps season in the Fighting Fifth Handicap Hurdle before taking up stud duties.

"I have a verbal agreement

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: GOLDENSWIFT
(1.50 Newbury)
Next best: Karshi
(2.20 Newbury)

to ride Alderbrook and One Man in all their races this season," Dunwoody said yesterday. "It looks as though Alderbrook is bound for Newcastle and I will be there to ride him. It's an unfortunate clash of dates, but it happens. I'm looking forward to riding the horse, wherever he runs."

The Hennessy remains elusive to Dunwoody among five major races in the National Hunt calendar. He has secured victories in the Grand National, the Cheltenham Gold Cup, the King George VI Chase and the Champion Hurdle, in which he rode Alderbrook to finish second to Collier Bay eight months ago.

Kim Bailey, who trains Alderbrook, yesterday reported his charge in rude health for his seasonal reappearance.



Alderbrook, who won the Champion Hurdle in 1995, makes his seasonal reappearance in the Fighting Fifth Handicap Hurdle at Newcastle

"He is pretty straight now and will be ready to run somewhere near his best on November 30," Bailey said. "The horse has been with me for the last 12 months and he has had a rest for the first time in his career. He spent two months out in a field during the summer, so it will be nice to start fresh."

Alderbrook has previously been campaigned throughout the year. Successful in group two company on the Flat, he enjoyed his finest hour at Cheltenham in 1995 when running away from Large

Action in the Champion Hurdle. His career has been plagued by troublesome fetlock joints, from which fragments of bone were removed last year, but Bailey is delighted with the seven-year-old's limbs thus far. He added that Alderbrook would not be

risked on unsuitably fast ground.

In addition to Alderbrook's reappearance, the latter days of November will determine whether Master Oats, Bailey's 1995 Cheltenham Gold Cup winner, can resume his chasing career. The trainer said of

JULIAN HERBERT

the season and return next year."

The Upper Lambourn trainer nominated Feed The Power, due to reappear at Kempton a week today, as probably his best novice chase prospect. "We will start him off over two miles," Bailey said. "I don't think he saw out the extended 2½ miles when third in the Cheltenham Chase."

Meanwhile, Strong Medicine is expected to line up in the Murphy's Gold Cup at Cheltenham on Saturday. Conor O'Dwyer, who replaced Norman Williamson as stable jockey at the start of the season, will be aboard the first Sandown winner.

Like O'Dwyer, Dunwoody must embark on regular journeys to Ireland to fulfil his riding commitments. Although he has agreements with Dermot Weld and the expanding Edward O'Grady operation, Dunwoody remains very much in demand among British trainers. He regularly rides for Gordon Richards and David Gandy, and recently reactivated an old association when partnering Silver Shred for Martin Pipe at Chepstow last Saturday.

Indeed, Dunwoody's alliance with the Pipe-trained Challenger Du Luc for the Murphy's Gold Cup has triggered a deluge of support for the six-year-old chaser. From an opening quote of 16-1, Challenger Du Luc has now advanced to joint-favourite in the ante-post markets.

"Mr O'Grady has a lot of nice young horses which won't be ready until the second half of the season," Dunwoody explained, "so I've got a bit of time on my hands." His prowess is such that he will not be allowed to idle away.

Aga Khan
renews
link with
Stoute

ONE of racing's most successful partnerships is to resume after confirmation that Michael Stoute will receive five yearlings to train before the end of the year.

Stoute and the Aga enjoyed a fruitful association before the owner withdrew his horses from Britain over Alysa's disqualification from the 1989 Oaks, after traces of the banned substance camphor were found in her urine.

In the ensuing dispute with the Jockey Club over its drug-testing procedures, the Aga withdrew his horses from the stables of Stoute and Luca Cumani. Stoute, in total, in 1990 to concentrate his breeding and training operations in France and Ireland through Chantilly trainer Alain de Royer-Dupré and Co Kildare-based John Oxx.

Among the big-race victories the Aga and Stoute shared during the 1980s were Shergar's ten-length triumph in the 1981 Derby and the 1986 Derby victory of Shahzani.

The Aga announced last year that he would revive his involvement with British racing, and the Luca Cumani-trained Mandilak won for him at Yarmouth a fortnight ago.

On hearing confirmation that his yard would also benefit from a return of the owner's patronage, Stoute said: "I am delighted at the Aga Khan's decision to send me yearlings this year."

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Flying Scot ready for take-off with the stars

David Powell talks to Ian Mackie about life as the new No 1 of British sprinting

It was a day which illustrated perfectly the single-mindedness of Ian Mackie. The wind blew cold, grey skies hung over the Cardiff Athletic Stadium and there was rain in the air. Mackie was sniffing with a winter chill, his watery eyes crying for a sick note to take the day off training. But Mackie trained on.

If only the workmen on the building site who scoffed at him six years ago could see him now. Friends in high places, bags packed ready for five weeks' training in Australia, photo-shoots, children knocking at his door asking for his autograph.

He wishes the workmen from the Dunfermline roof tiling business, where he was employed as a 15-year-old straight out of school, would knock too. "I would really like to see them again, just to say: 'What do you think now? You laughed in my face.' When I told them I was going to do athletics, they just laughed."

Mackie gave up the job after his first week and never worked again, determined to prove that he could be a successful athlete, often reminding himself of what life might hold if he failed. "That week really toughened me up," Mackie, now 21, said. "It made me think twice about how hard life can be."

If becoming the first British athlete for a decade to beat Linford Christie over 100 metres in August was his week in heaven, his roof-tiling job was his week in hell. "I was lifting heavy tiles, sometimes with a 45-foot drop to the ground," Mackie said. "They were get-

ting me to carry big rolls of felt and bags of cement. I was just 15 and they got me to do it because I was the apprentice."

Once, when a tractor ran into scaffolding on which Mackie was perched, he avoided a 40-foot fall only by an instinctive hand thrown out to grip a saving wall. "I thought: 'I'm just going to get injured,'" Mackie recalled.

Consumed by a passion to follow Christie to the top of world sprinting, he left. For five years, he survived on the support of his parents — his father is a storeman, his mother a cleaner — and income support, and 12 months ago, remaining a full-time athlete looked as shaky as his footing on the scaffolding.

"I had just got back into training after recovering from an inflamed muscle," he said. "I was unemployed, money was tight, and mum and dad were saying: 'You should be getting a job because you've been injured this season and nothing has happened.'

"My mum and dad were concerned for my future. They were saying: 'You cannot sign on unemployed for the rest of your life.'"

Recovery from injury, an Olympic semi-final place, a personal best of 10.17 seconds, and above all, downing Christie has reversed his fortunes.

Mackie has been recruited by the management agency owned by Christie and Colin Jackson. He has on tap the experience and advice that they can bring. They are financing his training in Australia, for which he leaves tomorrow, and will be there with him. As he builds up to

the 1996 world championships, Mackie will also train in the company of Frankie Fredericks and Merlene Ottey.

"I have been thrown into a world of world-class athletics," Mackie said after his first training session with Jackson.

"Last year, I was watching Colin, Linford and Frankie on TV and, all of a sudden, I am with them. It is hard to describe what it feels like."

Now that Christie has retired, Mackie may succeed him as European champion in



Mackie, left, and Jackson, right, train together for the first time in Cardiff yesterday ahead of five weeks in Australia

1998. In the meantime, the Scot is looking to reach the world championship final in Athens but is well aware that he cannot take being the British No 1 for granted. Darren Campbell also ran 10.17 last summer and he, too, is training under Jackson and Christie. Mackie and Campbell will be together in Australia.

"I believe those two will definitely go under 10.1 this year and, in good conditions, I am sure they can both duck a 9.9," Jackson said. "It is good

we will be working together," Mackie added. "We will bring each other on."

When Jackson spoke to Mackie about joining his agency, he was impressed. "I saw similarities in his approach as a 21 year-old as my approach at the same age," Jackson said. "It was just the importance of track in the life of somebody so young. He wanted to do well, he trained hard. I thought: This guy can make it."

Making it was Mackie's

dream since the day that he was taken to watch Christie. "I had done athletics but I was not into it deep," Mackie recalled. "At the time I was also doing karate. I did not know what I wanted.

"I had this opportunity to get Linford's autograph. It made my day. That night it just clicked that this was what I wanted to do. I wanted to be like Linford." So far so good, but the hardest part — Olympic champion, world champion — lies far ahead.

BADMINTON

Bradbury expecting to return

JULIE BRADBURY, the most successful England player of the past two years, may not play at the highest level again (Richard Eaton writes). Bradbury, who was runner-up in the All-England Championships and the World Grand Prix finals in mixed doubles, and won the Malaysian open women's doubles last season, is expecting a baby.

The Oxfordshire player has withdrawn from the six-match series against China, starting at Exeter today, and will not

play again until next summer, by which time she will be 30. Bradbury hopes to return to the England squad, but there are no mothers competing at the highest level on the world circuit and after a season out of the game it would be asking a great deal for her to return to her former standard.

England, who beat China for the first time in a series last year, will give a mixed doubles debut to Lorraine Cole, of Worcestershire, who will partner Julian Robertson. They

IN BRIEF

Challenge Cup entry is doubled

THE number of amateur rugby league clubs in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup is being doubled to a record 72 in the competition's centenary year (Christopher Irvine writes). West Hull created history last season and replaced by the Italian driver, Giancarlo Fisichella.

Alesi and Flavio Briatore, the Benetton managing director, held an urgent meeting at the team's headquarters at Enstone, Oxfordshire, on Monday to discuss his future in light of the reduced revenue that the team can expect from sponsors because of its moderate performances last year.

Alesi and Gerhard Berger, his Austrian team-mate, failed to record a victory between them in 1996 after the team triumphs brought by Michael Schumacher in the previous two years. The drought is thought to have cost Benetton several million pounds in their performance-related deal with their main sponsors, Mild Seven, the Japanese tobacco company.

A mixture of bad luck and bad judgment cost Alesi and Berger the chance of victory

MOTOR RACING

Alesi holds departure talks with Benetton

BY OLIVER HOLT

JEAN ALESI, the French Formula One driver, who survived a bid to oust him from the Benetton team in favour of Damon Hill at the end of last season, could still be forced out before the start of next season and replaced by the Italian driver, Giancarlo Fisichella.

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A mixture of bad luck and bad judgment cost Alesi and Berger the chance of victory

Unmasking of Louisa May

Sensational Women. Radio 4 (FM) 10.00am.

The recent discovery of the manuscript for *The Chase*, a dark novel that had lain forgotten for a century, gave many of us a bit of a shock. Could this really be by the same Louisa May Alcott fondly remembered for *Little Women*, that testament to enduring family values and its sequel? It was. *The Chase* wasn't the only novel to reveal the other side of her literary talent. *Sensational Women*, the last sort of title we would once have imagined could have anything to do with the retiring and selfless Louisa May, digs up other long-forgotten novels such as her *Behind a Mask* in which a governess turns out to be a con-artist — and, what's more, gets away with it. We hear excerpts from it this morning.

Hearing with Hegley. Radio 4. 11.15pm.

Last week, tuning in for the first time to John Hegley, described in *Radio Times* as the poet laureate of alternative comedy, I confess to deciding to turn him off, then changing my mind. I confess that most alternative comedy makes me wince, either because it is puerile or because it sickens me when according to the rules of comedy, I should be laughing my head off, like his audience. Nothing daunted, I tuned in to tonight's edition. I do not care for his poem about condoms, but much admire his miniature verse for furniture. Hegley is growing on me.

GILL ALLEN

RADIO CHOICE

RADIO 1

6.30am Chris Evans 9.00 Simon Mayo, includes the Golden Hour 12.00am *Liza Minnelli*, includes a 12.30am *John Peel* and at 1.15pm *Tim Rice* 2.00 *Nicky Campbell* 4.00 *Mark Goodier*, includes at 5.30-5.45 *Newbeat* 7.00 *Evening Session*, with Jo Whiley and Steve Lamacq 10.00 *Stuart Maconie*, live from Manchester 12.00 *Steve Sturges* 4.00am *Clive Warden*, with the Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 2

8.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 *Woke Up Young* 1.00 *John Peel* 2.00 *Breakfast Programme*, incl at 6.00 *7.30 racing preview* 8.35 *The Magazine* 9.00 *Europe* 10.00 *National Business Report* 9.15 *Andy Kershaw* 9.45 *Sports Roundup* 10.30 *BBC English 10.45 On the Shelf* 11.00 *World News* 12.15 *British Today* 1.30 *Composers* 2.05 *The Moon* 2.05 *Outback* 2.30 *Megan* 3.00 *Sports Roundup* 3.15 *Concert Hall* 4.15 *World Today* 4.30 *BBC English 4.45 Broadcast* 5.00 *World News* 5.30 *Breakfast Programme* 6.00 *7.30 Words of Faith* 7.30 *Multicultural World* 8.00 *World Business Report* 9.15 *British Today* 9.30 *Mendan* 10.00 *World Today* 11.15 *Sport* 12.15 *Science* 1.30 *World News* 2.00 *Europe* 2.30 *Concert Hall* 4.15 *World Today* 4.30 *BBC English 4.45 Broadcast* 5.00 *World News* 5.30 *Breakfast Programme* 6.00 *7.30 Words of Faith* 7.30 *Multicultural World* 8.00 *World Business Report* 9.15 *British Today* 9.30 *Mendan* 10.00 *World Today* 11.15 *Sport* 12.15 *Science* 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No delight in the victorious kitchen garden

Death is a word much overused by television critics, but it would be silly to pretend that it doesn't have its uses. It is one up from "charming", perfect for describing those artfully made but easily watched programmes that send us to bed with a smile, and the nearest we get to the one-word accolades of the theatre poster. So there was I all ready to write of *Going to Chelsea* (ITV) — "a delight" (*The Times*). Then I watched it.

Disappointment, it must be said, took some time to set in. Indeed for the first 20 minutes, last night's fly-on-the-wall look at the Chelsea Flower Show appeared a copper-bottomed delight. Amusing characters, jolly music and a positive sense of stylish photography — dogs trotting after cars, elderly gentlemen cycling into the middle distance, you know the kind of thing. A delight, no doubt about it.

But then, rather like the dolphin-

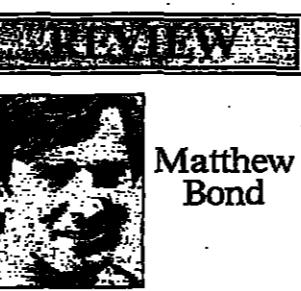
tuna so crucial to Stephen Woodhams' blue-and-orange kitchen garden, it wifed. And since I still can't work out who it was — lost interest. It may have been Michael Davies, the director, who, as the opening day grew closer, curiously seemed to have less and less to show us. Or it may have been Woodhams, whose enthusiasm appeared to fade the nearer his beautifully drawn planting plans came to reality. Alternatively, I suppose it could have been me. Never been a great one for gardening.

I am, however, a great one for documentaries and this one, despite the wonderfully promising subject, goes down as a near miss. Loose ends, for instance, were worryingly untied with all sorts of horticultural crises unresolved by the final credits. Did the Italian wisteria go bad? Did the willow stems grow around the window frame? And most importantly, of

all, did Mrs Woodhams allow her son to dig up her prized rhubarb? Since one of the reasons the garden was awarded a silver medal rather than a gold was "not enough vegetables", I presume the answer to that final question was no.

Come the big day, nothing quite worked as Davies would surely have liked it. Woodhams overslept, the weather was horrible and the garden, I regret to say, looked a tad unremarkable, especially given the £50,000 outlay. An apparent lack of blue suggested that money can't buy you love — or unwilling delphiniums. A weary Woodhams never did tell us what he thought of the finished product but resolved never to work with vegetables again. Or camera crews. I

Delight is too strong a word to describe *University Challenge* (BBC2) but it is certainly fun, with



Matthew Bond

Jeremy Paxman now firmly and enjoyably established in the chairman's seat. Last night's game between Imperial College, the reigning champions, and Paxman's old college, St Catherine's, Cambridge, was a thriller, with Imperial coming back from dead-and-buried to level at the going. At the start, Paxman had promised Catz (his abbreviation, not mine) no favours but he did at

least ensure that the tie-breaker was an arts question. "The girl with enamel eyes is the subtitle of which ballet by Delibes?" I hadn't a clue but Mr Amos, the star of the St Catherine's team, did. "Was it Coppelia?" It was.

Which brings me to an important point. How many *University Challenge* questions should a reasonably educated person be able to answer? Starters for ten to which the answer is "Captain Pugwash" certainly lure you into a false sense of security — but just when you're thinking "easy-peasy, lemon-squeezey", along comes a beautifully constructed bonus involving oliveine, the Olive Tree Alliance and the Mount of Olives. I haven't counted but I reckon that anything close to 50 per cent is probably pretty good going.

It must be some sort of defining moment when you realise you have become the answer to a quiz question. So something of a red-

letter day for Paul Hardcastle yesterday, whose mid-1980s hit (N-n-n-n-) *Nineteen* was the answer to both a *University Challenge* question (Imperial got that one, then spoilt the effect by suggesting Janis Ian learnt the truth at 16) and to what passed for a question on the extraordinary *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* (BBC2).

Which one of our Paul Hardcastle identity parades is the real Paul Hardcastle?" asked questionmaster Mark Lamarr. "Is it number two?" shouted somebody, forgetting that the idea is not to be right but funny. It was. "N-n-n-nineteen," went everybody. My.

What *Have I Got News for You* has done for news and *They Think It's All Over* has done for sport, *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* now plans to do for pop music and probably will. The formula is

familiar. Take two comedians, four pop stars and a generous helping of pre-written ad-libs on the Autocue and you have it. Or rather, there you have it once you have remembered whatever the magic ingredient is that gets the frenzied high excitement they were in for last night's opener. Whatever it is, I don't want any.

Earlier, BBC2's new series about the British legal system, *The Verdict*, had got off to an interesting but hardly mould-breaking start when it looked at the tricks barristers play during cross-examination.

So it was that we learnt about the no-win question ("when did you stop beating your wife?"), the unexpected opening gambit ("are you now or have you ever been a practising television critic?") and above all, the importance of always having George Carman, QC, on your side.

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BBC1	
6.00am BUSINESS BREAKFAST (72415)	
7.00 BBC BREAKFAST NEWS (Ceefax) (36874)	
9.00 BREAKFAST NEWS EXTRA (Ceefax) (634787)	
9.20 STYLE CHALLENGE (s) (147434)	
9.45 KILROY (s) (933868)	
10.30 CAN'T COOK, WON'T COOK (s) (12619)	
11.00 NEWS; REGIONAL NEWS (Ceefax) and weather (2719481)	
11.05 THE REALLY USEFUL SHOW (s) (4337400)	
11.45 SMILLIE'S PEOPLE (s) (6154752)	
12.00 NEWS; REGIONAL NEWS (Ceefax) and weather (4070481)	
12.05pm POLICE RESCUE (s) (2797228)	
12.55 THE WEATHER SHOW (51117874)	
1.00 NEWS (Ceefax) and weather (32961)	
1.30 REGIONAL NEWS (14339110)	
1.40 NEIGHBOURS (Ceefax) (s) (2420110)	
2.00 CALL MY BLUFF (s) (3386 2.30 A WEEK IN THE COUNTRY (s) (110) 3.00 INCOGNITO (5771)	
3.30 ANTS IN YOUR PANTS (8242955) 3.50 CHUCKLEVISION (8471619) 4.10 GET YOUR OWN BACK (5817058) 4.35 THE QUEEN'S NOSE (1985955) 5.00 NEWGROUND (8430665) 5.10 BLUE PETER (Ceefax) (2525265)	
5.35 NEIGHBOURS (r) (Ceefax) (s) (828136)	
6.00 NEWS (Ceefax) and weather (139)	
6.30 REGIONAL NEWS MAGAZINES (619)	
7.00 SMALL TALK Presented by Ronnie Corbett (Ceefax) (s) (7752)	
7.30 HERE AND NOW Sue Lawley and the team present news stories and items of interest (Ceefax) (s) (503)	
8.00 HOW DO THEY DO THAT? Revealing how police cameras catch speeding motorists and how one man can tame a wild and tempestuous horse in a matter of minutes (Ceefax) (s) (152684)	
8.50 POINTS OF VIEW Presented by Anne Robinson (Ceefax) (s) (283933)	
9.00 NEWS (Ceefax) REGIONAL NEWS and weather (9145)	
9.30 THE X FILES Syfy Mulder and Scully investigate rumours of a satanic cult operating in an area where several teenagers have died. With David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson (Ceefax) (s) (792348)	
10.45 HARRY ENFIELD AND CHUMPS (r) (Ceefax) (s) (148226) WALES: Kene's Wales 11.15 1.15pm: National Lampoon's European Vacation (1985) with Chevy Chase. The accident-prone Griswold family win a European holiday on an American television quiz show. Directed by Amy Heckerling (513077)	
12.15pm FILM: Necessary Roughness (1992) with Scott Bakula. After sacking their old football team, Texas State University hires a coach to assemble a new one. Directed by Stan Dragoti (252240)	
2.00 WEATHER (7194822)	

BBC2	
6.00am O! POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT (5717639) 6.50 WORLD OF THE DRAGON (2233269) 7.15 SEE HEAR BREAKFAST NEWS 7.30 PERILS OF PENELOPE PITSTOP (4105603) 7.55 ITLL NEVER WORK (r) (Ceefax) (7561597) 8.20 CHRISTOPHER CROCODILE (s) (5985923) 8.25 MONTY (r) (5985923) 8.35 RECORD (s) (6947416) 9.00 DAYTIME ON TWO: LE CAFE DES REVES (1485400) 9.25 SEE YOU, SEE ME (8251936) 9.45 WORDS AND PICTURES (5389972) 10.00 PLAYDAYS (24597) 10.30 NUMBER-TIME (3977058) 10.45 CATS' EYES (3922123) 11.00 AROUND SCOTLAND (5327652) 11.20 MUSIC MAKERS (716146) 11.40 ENGLISH EXPRESS (8240503) 12.00 GERMAN GLOBE (4078203) 12.05 SEEING THROUGH SCIENCE (4952868) 12.30pm WORKING LUNCH (50664) 1.00 THE GEOGRAPHY PROGRAMME (4194143) 1.20 THUNDERBIRDS (IN HINDI) (4821868) 1.25 ZIG ZAG (9724028) 1.45 COME OUTSIDE (1429787) 2.00 CHRISTOPHER CROCODILE (r) (4665400) 2.05 MONTY (r) (4665771) 2.10 THE CHAMPIONS (Ceefax) (5848747) 3.00 NEWS (Ceefax) (5681394) 3.55 NEWS: 4.00 TODAY'S THE DAY (s) (2322) 4.30 READY, STEADY, COOK (s) (418) 5.00 OPRAH WINFREY SHOW (Ceefax) (s) (2933400) 5.40 MARY BERRY AT HOME (s) (615110) 5.55 TURNING POINTS (543955) 6.00 STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION (Ceefax) (s) (357416) 6.45 TREVOR AND SIMON'S TRANSMISSION IMPOSSIBLE (s) (509651) 7.00 TESTAMENT: THE BIBLE IN ANIMATION (Ceefax) (s) (5394) 7.30 FROM THE EDGE (Ceefax) (s) (145) 8.00 TRUST ME, I'M A DOCTOR (Ceefax) (s) (4042) 8.30 TWO FAT LADIES Last in the series (Ceefax) (s) (5077)	
9.00 NEWS; REGIONAL NEWS (Ceefax) and weather (139)	
9.30 THE X FILES Syfy Mulder and Scully investigate rumours of a satanic cult operating in an area where several teenagers have died. With David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson (Ceefax) (s) (792348)	
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9.00 MODERN TIMES: Dog Trouble (Ceefax) (s) (424874)	
9.50 NAKED CITY: The Day of Reckoning (Ceefax) (s) (139400)	
10.30 NEWSNIGHT (90868)	
11.15 SOHO STORIES (671961)	
12.00 MIDNIGHT HOUR (s) (25258)	
12.30pm THE LEARNING ZONE: O! OPEN ADVICE (58820) 1.00 IMAGINING NEW WORLDS (17192) 1.30 WHO BELONGS TO GLOWSTICK? (22494)	
2.00 TOOLS FOR TUTORIALS (22207) 4.00 ENGLISH HERITAGE (3349) 4.30 MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS (17462) 5.00 HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK (20682) 5.30 ADVISER (26917)	

Dog warden Trevor Cook (9.00pm)

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**CRICKET 42**

Leading lights who were ahead of rest of the field

SPORT

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 13 1996

FOOTBALL 44

Wilson takes first steps down long road to recovery



Henman outlines plan to double his efforts after routine first-round triumph

Bates puts case for national unity

BY ALIX RAMSAY

THERE were signs of British tennis past, present and future yesterday in Telford at the Guardian Direct British national championships. The past came in the shape of Jeremy Bates, the present was represented — as it has been all year — by Tim Henman, while the future promises the two of them working in tandem.

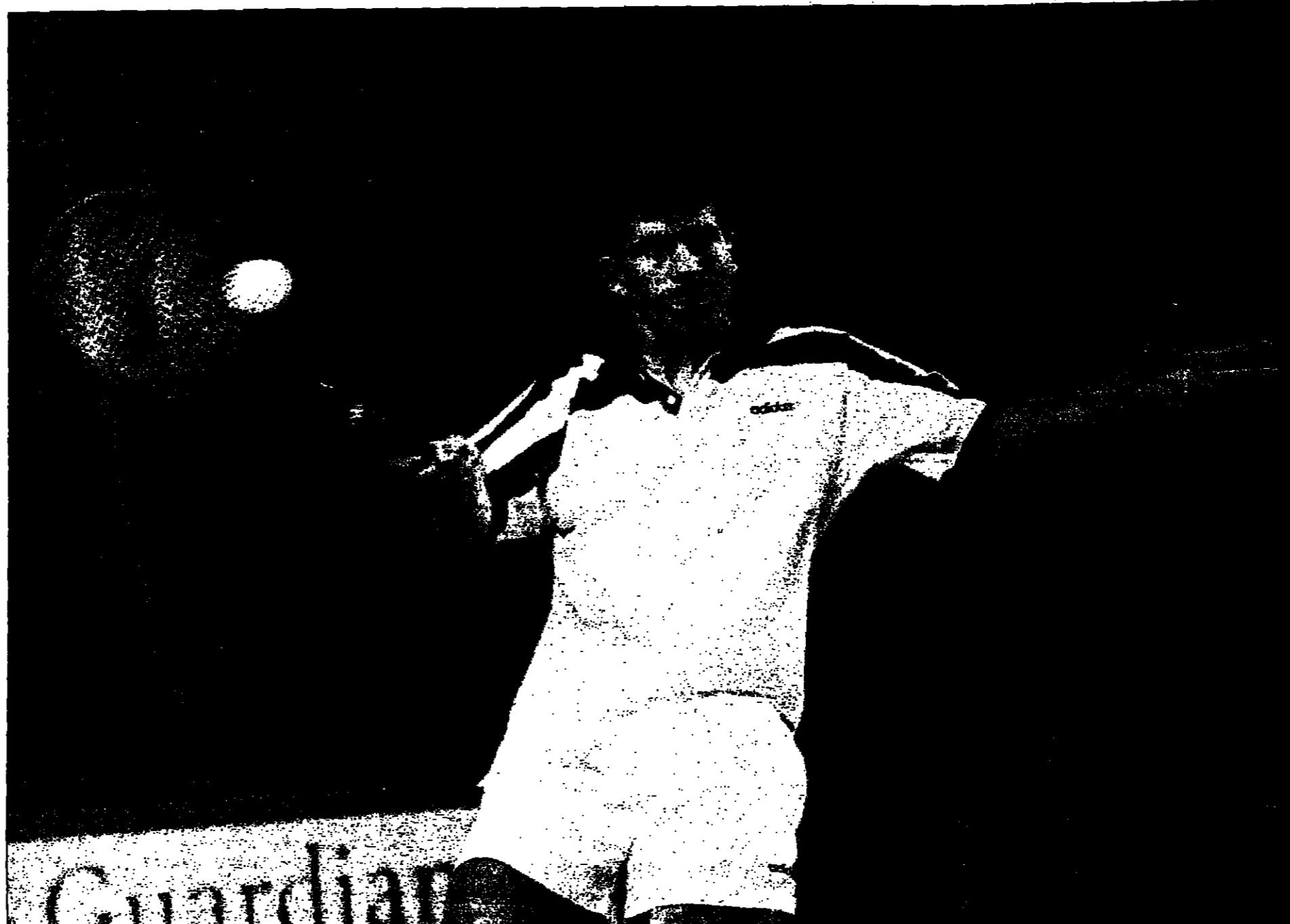
Bates took a few tentative steps out of retirement to dispose of David Draper 6-4, 6-4 and make his way into the second round, his first competitive match since Wimbledon. Apart, that is, from an over-35s event in Germany three weeks ago, when he beat Anders Jarryd in the final. Quite what he was doing there is unclear — Bates is still only 34 — but, having won six titles here, Bates could not resist the call of one last week in Telford. He has few ambitions for

Telford results 43

his own tennis this week and once Draper was sent packing he seemed rather more excited about his new role with the Lawn Tennis Association, taking charge of men's national training. In the days when Bates was making his way up the ranks, there was little in the way of a recognisable system to help him. Now he is in charge, Bates wants to make a difference.

"I want to see the development of good juniors into good seniors," Bates said. "I want to start a number of things. We will try to set up some training camps with juniors and seniors both involved, hopefully in Florida a couple of times a year. We will get Tim and Greg [Rusedski] involved, as well as the leading juniors and leading coaches."

The idea is to get around 20 players at under-15s and under-16 level together to learn from the professionals. "It's good for the juniors to be involved with the seniors," Bates said, a point reinforced by Henman. "I practised with Jeremy a lot when I was young," he said, "and I learnt that there is no magic secret. Hopefully the



Henman, the British No 1, had little difficulty accounting for Saffery in the first round of the national championships yesterday. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

younger players will see Greg and myself practise and learn the same. They will see that we work hard but we also have a lot of fun with what we're doing."

Henman has a few plans of his own for the future. The past few weeks have hardly

been productive, with three first-round losses in three weeks. But while a 6-4, 6-2 first-round win over Gregg Saffery, a 24-year-old qualifier who struggles to make a living on the satellite circuit, does not constitute a significant achievement, a win is still a win. "Yeah, I was fairly anxious not to make it four in a row," he said with a hint of a grin.

After a spectacular year that has taken him to a handful of semi-finals but no further,

Henman is now planning the next step for the new year. Part of the plan is to play more doubles in order to improve his physical and mental stamina. At the moment, he is comparing diaries with Jan Siemerink, of Holland, to see whether they can set up a regular partnership.

"Maybe I need to become fitter and stronger," he said. "I've not progressed beyond the semi-finals, when I am playing opponents who are supposedly fitter and stronger,

and playing more doubles is an area that I think will help to improve my physical condition and strength." Not that he needed a great deal of either against Saffery, unlike his opposite number in the British women's rankings.

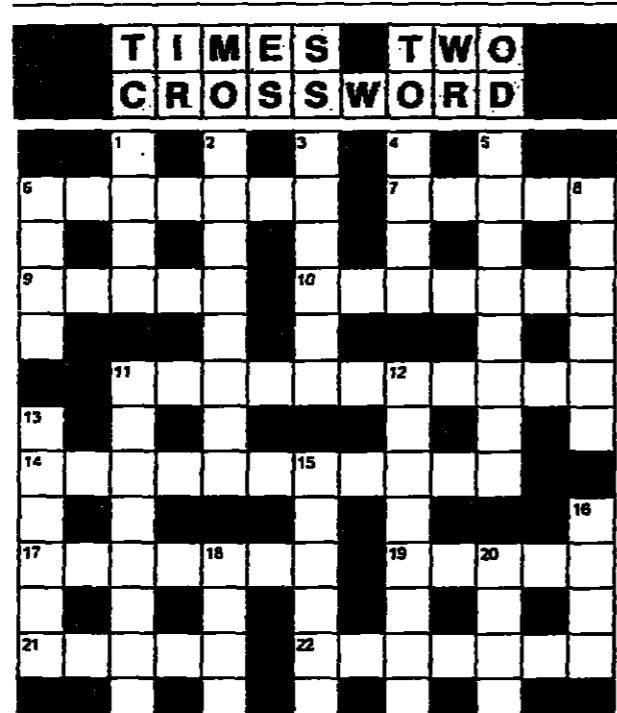
Sara Smith, the No 1 seed, struggled for nearly two hours against Abigail Torroff before edging through 26-75, 6-3. There must have been something in the air at the Telford International Centre as just a couple of hours later Rachel

Violet, the No 2 seed, went out to Lorna Woodroffe. Violet can just about lay claim to being British. She was born in Manchester but has spent most of her 24 years in Miami and, faced with the prospect of a cold, wet November in Telford, she went out 6-4, 6-4.

The former British No 1, Clare Wood, was not enjoying her spell in Telford either. She made heavy weather of her victory over Shirley-Anne Siddall, struggling through a marathon match to win 6-7,

6-4, 6-2. She sped to convincing leads in the first two sets before allowing Siddall back into the fight. But she finally learnt her lesson and headed for the second round.

The two national junior champions, Arvind Parmar, from Hertfordshire, and Louise Latimer, from Warwickshire, both made the most of their wild cards yesterday. Parmar beat Mike Boulding, from Yorkshire, 6-4, 6-3, while Latimer defeated Vicki Davies, from Wales, 4-6, 6-4, 6-0.



ACROSS
6 Travesty; parlour-game act (7)
7 Forcefulness plant; water-bily (5)
9 Holy book (5)
10 Jap, floral art (7)
11 Gesture of reconciliation (5,6)
14 (Remark) with nice and nasty meanings (6-5)
17 Got own back (for) (7)
19 Maurice — Fr. composer (5)
21 Lure; diversion (5)
22 — Kipling (7)

SOLUTION TO NO 937

ACROSS: 1 Shan 4 Potlach 8 Fair game 9 Bunk 10 Cynic 11 Scenery 13 Tattoo 15 Simple 18 Macabre 20 Adieu 23 Dish 24 Wildlife 25 Measured 26 Rank
DOWN: 2 Heady 3 Marais 4 Plan 5 To excess 6 Afan 7 Control 10 Cut 12 Borrower 14 Avarice 16 Modular 17 Emu 19 Athos 21 Efin 22 Ploid

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD
In association with BRITISH MIDLAND

ACROSS: 1 Pollster 5 Mess 9 Onion 10 Globule 11 Calcon 12 Salyr 13 Women's Lib 18 Anger 20 Shuffle 22 Miranda 23 Stars 24 Neep 25 Peat moss
DOWN: 1 Plough 2 Laid low 3 Singe 4 Egg on one's face 6 Erupt 7 Sherry 8 Morsel 14 Marine 15 Buffalo 16 Cayman 17 Census 19 Gorge 21 Upset
1st PRIZE of a return ticket travelling economy class to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND'S domestic or international network is R Clegg, Selsby Oak, Birmingham.
2nd PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND'S domestic network is E J Jones, Penistone, Sheffield.
All flights subject to availability.

Ireland lose Aldridge to Rovers

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

JOHN ALDRIDGE yesterday announced that he is retiring from international football so that he can concentrate on being player-manager of Tranmere Rovers, of the Nationwide League first division.

Aldridge made his decision known to Mick McCarthy, the Ireland manager, after being confined to the substitutes' bench throughout the goalless World Cup group eight qualifying match with Iceland in Dublin on Sunday.

The striker, 38, was hoping to score the goal that would have equalled Frank Stapleton's Ireland record of 20 goals, but he said: "I have decided to retire from international football because of my complete commitment as player-manager of Tranmere Rovers Football Club.

"I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who has given me their support and encouragement during my ten great years in international football, with precious memories that will stay with me for ever."

"It has been a gut-wrenching decision for me to make, but my commitments now with Tranmere mean that I can no longer afford to be away with the international squad if I am not actually going to play."

McCarthy said: "I'm disappointed but I can understand it." He denied rumours that he had had a difference of opinion with Aldridge. "He's been a great servant to Irish football," McCarthy said.

Aldridge, who won 69 caps for his country, was overlooked in favour of David Kelly, the Sunderland forward, on Sunday.

Andorrans set ball rolling on international career

Football is scaling new heights in the shadow of the Pyrenees.

Simon Wilde reports

described yesterday as "fairly well-equipped" by a Fifa official — to be full. This means a bumper crowd of 1,000; small, perhaps, by British standards, but that figure constitutes 5 per cent of the native Andoran population (which is outnumbered three-to-one by foreign residents and tourists). England would, proportionally, have to attract a home crowd of three million to match it.

Needless to say, the Andorran team will be largely made up of amateurs — bank clerks, civil servants, accountants and, predictably in a country so dependent on tourism, construction workers, a hotel manager and a tiff repair man — and is approaching its first match in suitably Corinthian spirit.

"The result is the least important thing," David Carpa, general secretary of the AFF, said. "The players accept that they are not as well-trained as their opponents. There is a lot of euphoria, a lot of expectation."

Andorra, a country of just 175 square miles sandwiched between France and Spain, has no professional league, only 300 registered players and joined Fifa, football's world governing body, five months ago, along with such luminaries as Guam, British Virgin Islands and Palestine (whose membership is, however, still provisional).

They have also joined Uefa, the European governing body, and hope to play in the next European championship, where they could find themselves in the same qualifying group as England, Spain, England, therefore, take the precaution of playing an exploratory match in Andorra, sampling skiving and duty-free on the way, before the Italian club, Cagliari.

Giovanni Palladini, Emerson's agent, who also represents Juninho and Ravarelli, the Italian forward, said that Emerson had been persuaded to give Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, more time to produce a winning team. "There was not a problem at the beginning of the season, because the team

Union puts forward plan for peace with clubs

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THE Rugby Football Union (RFU) last night delivered its offer to the leading English clubs — £8 million this season and £10 million the following two seasons — as the price of peace in the year-long battle with English Professional Rugby Union Clubs (Epruc). A letter to the clubs, explaining details of a revised agreement proposed by the RFU, says: "As we hope you will see, the agreement as drafted is generous, fair and reasonable, and represents a proper balance between the desire of the Epruc clubs for autonomy and the RFU's duty as a governing body to be a proper guardian of the game."

The offer, which the clubs have been asked to approve in principle by tomorrow, apparently has the backing of at least one second division club, Nottingham. It further allows for two Epruc members to be co-opted onto the RFU executive.

It remains to be seen whether Epruc, which has circulated its own draft agreement to clubs, and which the RFU finds unacceptable, will support the offer at a meeting in Northampton today. Epruc has already held out an olive branch in promising to release players from the first and second divisions for divisional matches next month.

The fixture chaos, which has angered clubs and is almost certain to see further postponements because of clashes of leagues and international dates, is also being looked at. Roger Pickering, the chief executive of the five nations' committee, offered hope of a properly-structured campaign for international teams, clubs and provinces throughout Britain and France from next September.

We are looking at a pan-European structure, whereby club matches and internationals would be played on the same dates in each country," he said.

Italy have recalled Massimo Cittini, their captain, after injury and Corrado Cov, the flanker, after a five-year absence, for the squad to face England at Twickenham on November 23.

SQUAD: M Cittini (captain), A Castrovilli, I Franciscato, L Momeni, D Scaglia, A Signori, A Tronconi, O Arancio, D Giangrande, C Orlandi, F Properi, Curi, S Scattolon, A Sestini, G Paganini, P Vecchi, A Berardi, C Cov, G Guidi, P Parola, M Giovannini.

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